

SKIING HERITAGE

JOURNAL OF ISHA, THE INTERNATIONAL SKIING HISTORY ASSOCIATION
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Harriman Cup • Sepp Ruschp • When Krucki Ruled • Golden Days of Ski Cartoons



ISHA and Its Mission



The International Skiing History Association is a not-for-profit corporation, whose mission is to preserve and advance the knowledge of ski history and to increase public awareness of the sport's heritage. More than 1,300 skiers belong to ISHA. While mostly from the United States, they hail from many nations. Members are defined by their love of the sport and of its rich past.

The Association was founded in 1991 by the late Mason Beekley, who amassed what is believed to be the world's largest private collection of ski books and art. The collection is now open to the public in a newly created museum at Mammoth Lakes, California. The International Skiing History Association's administration is located in Connecticut, where ISHA is incorporated.

How We Carry Out Our Mission

SKIING HERITAGE



PUBLICATION. ISHA publishes *SKIING HERITAGE*, a quarterly magazine of academic and popular ski history featuring profiles of the great racers and pioneers who shaped the sport. Regular departments describe early technique and equipment, resorts and historic inns. There are book reviews, and news of museum shows and openings. *SKIING HERITAGE* is created by the former chief editors and writers for national ski magazines and is overseen by an Editorial Review Board of knowledgeable ski historians. The official journal of the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame and Museum, it is the world's largest periodical devoted to ski history.



WEBSITE. ISHA operates the most extensive website dedicated to the sport's colorful past, www.skiinghistory.org. Our website includes an array of information—an index to past articles in *SKIING HERITAGE*, Olympic and World Championship records, biographies, important dates in ski history, a 50-year index to articles in *Ski Magazine*, and links to the websites of ski museums world-wide. You can join an on-line forum, ask questions about ski history, receive answers, and join in the commentary.



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By joining ISHA, you become part of a community of skiers working to preserve the sport's proud heritage. For \$30 annually, you receive four issues of *SKIING HERITAGE* and are eligible to participate in ISHA's annual Gathering. To become a member, use the return envelope in this issue, or send a check for \$30 to ISHA, P.O. Box 644, Woodbury, CT 06798. Multiple-year subscriptions are available, and you can pay by credit card.

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All gifts, including those made in the memory of others, are acknowledged in the pages of SKIING HERITAGE.

SKIING HERITAGE

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OF SKI HISTORY AND TO INCREASE PUBLIC
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On The Cover

"Sun Valley/Round House" by Dwight Shepler is one of several posters the artist created promoting travel to Idaho's Sun Valley. One of America's most popular scenic watercolorists, Shepler was a U.S. Navy combat artist during World War II who was also known for his posters promoting Dartmouth's early Winter Carnivals. The Shepler illustration on our cover is from a poster that recently sold for \$2,900 at Swann Galleries in New York (see story, pg. 21).

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THIS ONE



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Race-Testing Instructors

Regarding John Fry's letter in Readers Respond (Fourth Issue 2004) on testing ski instructors through racing, in the first exam held by Rocky Mt. Ski instructors in April 1951 the final requirement for full certification was to enter the May Day Slalom, the final race of the year. Although a percentage time was not required, competition was against the best racers in the Rockies.

A second requirement was to attend a Certified Race Officials clinic and

pass the test to become an official.

Two years later, Rocky Mt. Instructors organized the Masters Trophy Race. It was open to instructors only, and participation was required for all candidates. This requirement was dropped from certification several years later. However, the Masters Trophy Race is still held every year.

So history again seems to repeat itself.

Phil Clark
Georgetown, Colo.

Buek Does Spider Man

Here's another story to add to the Buek legend ["Dick Buek: Flat Out, Straight In," Third Issue 2004].

One morning in a modest Sun Valley accommodation (definitely not the Lodge, where the famous caroused), Mad Dog was seen and heard approaching at high speed up a long hall, guest rooms on both sides. He was not only coming up the hall, he was oscillating several feet up the walls and doors on either side—first right, then left, turning at the top of his climb

Recollections of North Conway

Your article "Beginning with Harvey" [Third Issue 2004] brought back memories of my formative years in northern New Hampshire.

Carroll and Kay Reed were good friends. It happened this way. During World War II, I was a photographer with the Allied troops in North Africa, taking pictures for *Yank Magazine*, which was published in Cairo. There I met Kay's brother, who was with the Air Force. When the North African campaign was over, I was suffering exhaustion and got leave to return home. Naturally, I went to North Conway, and introduced myself to the Reeds, courtesy of Kay's brother. I stayed at the Eastern Slope Inn, which was owned by Harvey Gibson.

After the war, I was in Carroll Reed's ski shop one day when Babe Ruth walked in. His daughter, Julia, had married the owner of the Cranmore Mountain Lodge, and the Babe and his wife often stayed there. He often went to the Skimobile base lodge to watch the skiers. The Bambino told Hannes that if he were younger he would love to ski, and thought that he would be good at it.

I also got to know the pianist Vladimir Horowitz and his wife, who was Toscanini's daughter. They had a bungalow, in which they vacationed every summer. At parties, I used to sing "Ragtime Cowboy Joe." Horowitz loved the song, and accompanied me on the piano.

A famous writer of the day, Michael Arlen, author of *The Green Hat* and a wealthy, sophisticated chap, often sat at the bar in the Eastern Slope Inn. He called the waiter and ordered two martinis. I asked him why he'd ordered two. "There's no such thing as one martini," huffed Arlen.

After the war, wealthy people came to learn to ski in northern New Hampshire. Rose Kennedy and Bobby Kennedy and his sisters all stayed at the Eastern Slope Inn. I once asked Henry Ford why he came to North Conway. "I'm going to St. Moritz," Ford replied, "and I want to learn the basics so that I can ski properly." Naturally, he enrolled in Hannes Schneider's ski school.

On the weekends, Ivy League students would come up in jalopies or on the Boston & Maine railroad. When North Conway's inns ran out of beds, the students were sent to sleep in people's homes, or even in the town jail.

Slim Aarons
Katonah, N.Y.

A photographer for Life and Town & Country, Slim Aarons is the author of the recent best-selling picture book, Once Upon a Time, published by Harry N. Abrams, Inc.



Slim gets tucked in at the North Conway jail, 1947.

halfway up the wall, letting the downward momentum on that wall carry him upward on the facing wall, taking in between no more than a couple of steps on what the less adventurous think of as a floor, all the while joyfully, breathlessly, shouting out "I got laid!"

The great moment came when someone opened a room door a split second before Buek got set to run into it. Carried along by his momentum, Buek flew the length of the room and out a window into a snow drift. On seeing Buek gleefully unclogging himself outside, it was uncertain at the moment whether the window had been open when Buek passed through it.

Kim Massie
Marbletown, N.Y.

Capricious Carve Redux

Inspired by the article on the history of the carved turn [Second Issue 2004], I'd like to offer my thoughts on the Jet Turn, a term first used by Honoré Bonnet, former coach of the French team, in an article in *Skiing*, November 1965, one of the earliest expositions on carving. It was such a significant advancement in ski technique and has been used by all top alpine competitors unknowingly, except to recognize that skis do accelerate out of the turn.

Jetting is a highly refined release of stored energy in a well-bent ski from a tightly carved turn in such a way as to cause the ski(s) to squirt forward out of the turn. The skis' acceleration is achieved by counter-rotation toward the end of the turn while maintaining a tight, narrow-track carve. Counter-rotation tends to force the skis' tails to slip out. However, a skilled skier edges the skis just enough to prevent it. Consequently, there's either a shortening of the turn's radius or [like a bent bow propelling an arrow] a jetting of the skis, creating a delicious sensation of the skis accelerating out from under the skier.

Bill Briggs
Jackson, Wyoming

Bill Briggs is ski school director at Snow King in Jackson and a longtime member of

ISHA who has faithfully attended many past Gatherings, bringing an array of stringed instruments and old ski songs. He appeared in "Maxing the Wow Factor" [Fourth Issue 2004]. As America's pioneer first-descent skier, he made a number of remarkable descents in Wyoming, culminating in a first descent of the Grand Teton in 1971. He was inducted into the Intermountain Ski Hall of Fame in September 2004.



(Left) Briggs in his days of first descents, c.1971. (Above) A mellow Briggs, strumming and singing at The Gathering, 2004.

I am in the process of writing a paper on how the thinking and writing relating to carving has influenced the current direction in carving. There are two bits of information that I don't seem to be able to find.

First, what was the date when Bode Miller used K2 Fours in the Super G in the Junior Olympics, did well, and changed the world's thinking about shaped skis?

Secondly, around 1998 Italy's Deborah Compagnoni was winning Olympic and World Cup GS races by nearly two seconds while using skis with a shorter sidecut radius than most everyone else. Approximately what sidecut radius was she using? Any help you can provide would be most appreciated.

Robert Albrecht
ralbrech@u.washington.edu

Seth Masia, ISHA's resident equipment expert, replies: Bode Miller would have been in the 1996 Junior Olympics. I worked briefly at K2 in 1994-95 and helped to define the dimensions of the deep-sidecut prototype that turned into the K2 Four the following year. There's a Sports Illustrated article that makes reference to Bode's use of the ski in Super G, GS and slalom. You can access it at sportsillustrated.cnn.com/si_online/news/2002/02/13/bode_andacious.

Deborah Campagnoni was on Dynastar skis in 1998, so the folks at Dynastar would be able to answer your second query. The question is whether her skis came out of the Dynastar shop in Sallanches, France, or out of the Rossignol race department. You may not get straight answers about this—or you may not even find anyone who remembers.

Sherburne and His Trail

In the historical record, it is stated that Mt. Washington's Sherburne Trail was finished in 1933 by Charles Proctor and shortly thereafter named for John Sherburne, but there is little identification of Sherburne the man. It would be a shame if his record is lost.

Sherburne was a member of the famous Ski Club Hochgebirge of Boston. His earliest competitive effort that I have a record of was the Dartmouth Outing Club's annual Mt. Moosilauke Carriage Road Downhill Race in 1931. Bob Livermore, a "Hochie" subsequently named to the 1940 Olympic team, won the Open Class in '9:54, followed by Charley Proctor, Dartmouth's 1928 Olympian, and Alex Bright, Boston's 1936 Olympian. Last was John Sherburne.

The next record I have of Sherburne is the Hochies' first Annual Invitation Team Race in 1932, again on Moosilauke. He was 22nd of 60 competitors, with the times a couple of minutes faster, possibly because of a shorter course.

On February 19, 1933 the Winnepesaukee Ski Club had scheduled an Open Downhill Race but there wasn't enough snow, so we all

drove up to Franconia Notch to try the brand new Taft Trail. It had been prepared in the summer by a CCC crew under Charley Proctor. However, the stumps had not been leveled and many were concealed by a couple of feet of fresh snow. None of us had seen the trail before nor were we used to racing in deep powder. It was slow going. My log shows "Chandler"—that's me, representing the DOC of Boston—in 6th and Sherburne 14th, with a field of 18 listed.

Then on March 12 the first National Downhill Championship was held on the Moosilauke Carriage Road. Sherburne was a creditable 23rd of 69 who finished. Ben Woods of Dartmouth was the winner in 8:00.8, a second ahead of Harry Hillman, who lost a ski on the sharp left turn just before the finish.

My last entry showing Sherburne's name is the U.S. Eastern Amateur Ski Association's third Annual Downhill Championship on the Taft, won by Dick Durrance in 2:42.0, quite an improvement over Rupert MacLaurin's 5:17.4 in our inaugural race on the Taft through deep powder and stumps.

So why was a trail named for Sherburne? Not for his skiing ability, which was capable and improving, although not near the top. But John was an enthusiastic skier who loved Mt. Washington's Ravine and would have been more than pleased to be honored with a lasting memorial that was definitely a better route back to Pinkham Notch than the Fire Trail.

More than that, no doubt, it was because he was a delightful man in every way—friendly, gregarious, cheerful, intelligent, gentlemanly—who, not long after my last log entry of him, sadly passed away. I, along with many others, was glad to be his friend.

He was not a champion skier, but he was a champion of a man.

Marvin Chandler
Carmel, Calif.

The Story of Roger Bushell

I am currently writing a biography of a South African named Roger Joyce Bushell (1910-1944), who was a well-known barrister in London and a champion skier during the 1930s.

A few secondary sources I've found state that Mr. Bushell was either a member of the British ski team represented at the 1936 Olympics or the coach of the team. I'd like to know of any involvement he had with the British Olympic ski team at that time. He graduated from Cambridge University in 1932, so it's possible that he may have been involved at that time as well.

Jennifer Schwartz
Ames, Iowa

In *The Story of Skiing* by Arnold Lunni, founding editor of the British Ski Year Book, Lunni writes, "Bushell, skiing for the British University Team, came in 15th in the 1935 World University Ski Championship at St. Moritz." Lunni also writes, "Roger Bushell, murdered in the war by the Nazis, was one of the dominant personalities of the Golden Age. In his first season at Sestriere, he was the uncrowned king of that famous Italian ski centre."

Evidently, Bushell also had a fine sense of humor. Lunni writes "I remember an Anglo-Swiss [post-race] dinner at which the Swiss captain, who was paralyzed by shyness, refused to utter a word. Roger Bushell then arose and spoke for him in perfect Swiss-German. Roger—in his role of Swiss captain—modestly deprecated the Swiss victory and generously admitted that 'Herr Roger Bushell might with a little luck have won the Downhill race...' " Lunni also writes "Of all the gallant com-

pany of British skiers who fell in battles which saved the world . . . Roger Bushell's exploits are described in Paul Brickhall's fine book, *The Great Escape*. On the first of his escapes, he was captured on the very frontier of Switzerland. On his second, after being at liberty for some months in Czechoslovakia, and after his third [capture], he was murdered by the Gestapo. His name is commemorated in the Roger Bushell run at St. Moritz."

Basement Treasure

I live in Cardiff in the United Kingdom, and while clearing out the basement of my house I came across a small badge wedged between two bricks. There is an image of a man on skis on the badge with an inscription that reads "Foreningen til ski idrettens fremme 1883" written on it.

Can you tell me what this badge may have been for and if the date on it actually represents its age?

Daniel Winston
dauwinston@nuthworld.com

ISHA's Einar Sunde replies: The design on the badge appears to be the standard insignia of the Norwegian Foreningen til Skiidrettens Fremme (Society for the Advancement of Skiing). The date 1883 refers to the date the group was founded and is not an indication of the badge's age. The design has been used for various badges over the years. Badges have been issued in silver and other metal, ranging in size from small pins to larger badges.

The Oslo Ski Museum has a number of badges of this design and may be the best source for information. Karin Berg, the museum's director, is very helpful. The museum has a website (www.skiforeningen.no); indeed, you will see the insignia on the home page. At the very least, Ms. Berg may be able to tell you when this design was first used on badges, or the age of the earliest one in their collection. *

When Krucki Ruled the World

*Austria's Stefan Kruckenhauser not only gave us *schwups*, reverse, and *wedeln*, the 'Professor' was also the first to capture them all painstakingly on film. A memoir by a teacher, disciple, and former student.*

By Dixi Nohl

Not one in the history of the sport was more intricately involved with the changing face of ski technique during the last half of the 1900s—or more influential in bringing an understanding of its nuances to the skiing public—than Professor Stefan Kruckenhauser of St. Christoph, Austria.

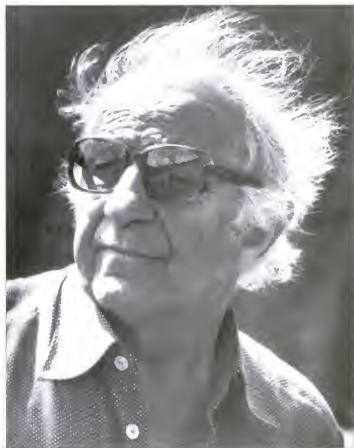
If Hannes Schneider—who invented the Arlberg technique in the second decade of the 1900s as the basis for a ski instructors' certification system—was the God of skiing, then "Krucki" was skiing's Pope, shepherding future Schneider disciples through the rigors of a program so demanding that those with the fortitude and skills acquired to master it became the most sought-after ski instructors in the world.

Kruckenhauser ruled, like the Pontiff, over his own Vatican—St. Christoph's Bundesheim, an entire institute chartered by Austria's Ministry of Education in 1924 to not only teach mountain climbing and ski instruction but to certify Austria's ski instructors, a group that would hold sway over ski teaching worldwide for more than 50 years.

Early on, Kruckenhauser never envisioned himself as the grand pooh-bah of Austrian skiing. The precocious youngster, in fact, had other plans.

He was born in 1905 in Munich, Germany. His mother—whose family name was Kruckenhauser—was originally from the small village of Rattenberg, east of Innsbruck, Austria. His father was Stefan Connert, a doctor from the town of Fogarash, Germany, in the county of Siebenbürgen. Dr. Connert attended medical school at the University of Innsbruck. Presumably, Dr. Connert met the young woman during this time and fathered her child. Unfortunately, she was unable to keep young Stefan, who eventually was raised by foster parents. The foster family moved frequently—from Munich to Steyr, Linz, Vienna, and finally to Teplitz-Schoenau, in the district of Bohemia.

During World War I, while his foster father—a strict



Krucki's unruly hair gave him an Einstein-like aura. "We thought of him as a school teacher—kind but strict, understanding but demanding."

disciplinarian—was away in the army, young Stefan found himself continually in trouble at school for "lack of effort." The situation changed rapidly after his foster father's return from the war during his second year in high school. Thereafter, he became a model student, a disciplined youngster who was consistently at the top of his class. Records do not indicate that Kruckenhauser was ever officially adopted by his foster parents, and in any event he continued to use his mother's family name.

The Lure of Mountains

After World War I, hiking in the mountains became his popular pastime. Kruckenhauser, like many teenagers at the time, trekked extensively through the hills of Bohemia and the foothills of the Alps near Vienna. Although he had not yet learned to ski, he developed a love for the mountains and a wanderlust that remained throughout his life. Eager to share the joy of his mountain experiences, he began to sketch, and then to photograph, his expeditions. He acquired his first camera at the age of 14. By the time he turned 16, he was giving lectures and slide shows on his experiences while hiking the land. Photography was a talent that would later serve him well. Over his lifetime, Kruckenhauser produced such highly acclaimed books on Austrian landscape and architecture as *Hidden Beauty, Snow Canvases: Skis, Men, and Mountains with the Leica*, *In Far*

Lines: A Photographer's Life Work, The Beautiful Winter in Tirol, and his work was featured in photo exhibitions in Italy and throughout Austria.

In the summer of 1923, 18-year-old Kruckenhauser enrolled at the Technical Institute in Vienna to study architecture, but he soon realized that this was not where his primary interest lay. While a student, he learned to ski at the outskirts of Vienna from friends Hugo and Leo Groeger. The Groegers were disciples of Mathias Zdarsky, who had invented an alpine ski method which allowed skiers to maintain control on steep slopes by means of using a single pole as a pivot.



Kruckenhauser through the years: (Top) Age 5, dapper in lederhosen. (Above) Age 14, with his first camera. (Right) Vienna years were an introduction to a life in skiing for college-age Krucki.

The Groegers introduced Kruckenhauser to the master himself. Kruckenhauser's admiration for Zdarsky was immediate, and the more he skied the less he wanted to focus on architecture. Decades later, Kruckenhauser would still talk about how much influence Zdarsky had on the direction his life had taken. In 1925, he decided to switch to a career in physical education. In 1927 he earned his

physical education teaching certificate with a thesis on skiing at the University of Vienna.

His teaching certificate in hand, Kruckenhauser continued with his studies in physical education, but his foster father, with whom he was very close, died in 1927, and this presented him with financial difficulties. Using his photographic skills to produce postcards, he was able to support himself and continue his studies, albeit at a somewhat slower pace.

Kruckenhauser began his teaching career at a high school in Salzburg in 1930, and in 1932 he finally finished his studies in physical education. While in Salzburg, Kruckenhauser met Luise Huttary, who was also teaching physical education. They married in 1933. In 1934 Kruckenhauser was offered the job of director at the Bundesheim in St. Christoph. Though the government facility was founded primarily to teach skiing and mountain climbing, it was also used to certify Austrian ski instructors. At that time, there were 600 certified instructors in Austria. As a result of his new appointment, Kruckenhauser was automatically a member of the Certification Commission, which included such skiing luminaries as Hannes Schneider and Austria's great ski champion, Toni Seelos.

Seelos Plants the Seed

The mid-Thirties were exciting times for Kruckenhauser. The sport of skiing was rapidly evolving. Beginning in 1933, Toni Seelos had achieved many racing victories by using a unique parallel turn that eliminated the stem completely. It soon became known widely as the Tempo Turn. Dick Durrance, then in his last year of racing in Europe, brought the turn back with him to the U.S. and began winning races by margins of five to ten seconds.

The German national team hired Seelos in 1934 to teach its racers the Tempo Turn, with the result that in the 1936 Olympics the Germans were one-two in the only alpine event. Although attempts were made by Dr. Fritz Hoschek and Friedl Wolfgang in 1933 and 1934 to modify the Austrian ski teaching method to include Seelos' widely copied style of skiing and move away from the stem turn of the Arlberg technique, tradition prevailed, and Hannes Schneider's method remained, for the time being, the preferred Austrian teaching technique.

A year later, in 1935, a book by Toni Ducia and Kurt Reinl was published in Paris under the title *Le ski d'aujourd'hui* (Skiing Today), and in 1936 two Swiss—Giovanni Testa and Prof. Dr. Eugen

Matthias—published the book *Natürliches Schilaulen* (Natural Skiing). Both books strongly criticized the whole-body rotation of the Arlberg technique as ineffective and promoted twisting only the lowerbody in the direction of the turn while the upper body counter-rotated, instead. Kruckenhauser found both books fascinating, later commenting that the books were ahead of their time and only



the inability to properly demonstrate and document the technique through film and sequence photography doomed the "reverse" technique to official rejection, in a fashion not dissimilar to the problems Kruckenhauser would encounter during the early stages of his work on the new Austrian Technique. When he showed his first film about the emerging reverse technique at the international ski congress in Davos in 1953, it was dismissed by even Austrian representatives as "disturbing."

Shortly after the annexation of Austria by Germany in 1938, Kruckenhauser was replaced as director of the Bundesheim by Friedl Wolfgang and the Bundesheim was renamed the "Reichsheim." Wolfgang had won the International Academic Championships in St. Moritz (1933) and was Austrian Downhill champion in 1935. These accomplishments, and the fact that he was a member of the Nazi Party (Kruckenhauser was not), contributed to his appointment. Kruckenhauser settled in Bregenz, 60 miles west of St. Christoph, and returned to teaching. Once World War II broke out in 1939, he was called into the army. His skills as a photographer once again came into play, and during the last three years of the war he served as a photojournalist in Yugoslavia and on the Russian front. In May 1945, he escaped capture by the Russian army entering Yugoslavia and hiked all the way back to Bregenz through the Austrian Alps. It took him more than three weeks, but his earlier experience in hiking through the mountains enabled him to cross the American, British, and French-occupied sectors undetected.

In 1946, one year after his return from the war, Kruckenhauser was offered his old job at the Bundesheim. He accepted it eagerly and moved back to St. Christoph. During the war, attempts had been made to teach the German mountain troops the parallel approach to skiing. Although the effort was unsuccessful—there were too many injuries—for Kruckenhauser the seed was planted for a system that put substantially more emphasis on teaching parallel turns than did the Arlberg method.

For two generations, in keeping with the Arlberg method, skiers had begun their turns with a rotation of the upper body. But by the 1950s increasing numbers of skiers were taking to the slopes, creating faster, hard-packed surfaces that left skiers little time to go through the motions necessary to initiate Hannes Schneider's classic Arlberg turns. Moreover, ski and boot design had improved dramatically, allowing turns to be made with far less effort and fewer body movements. A revolution in skiing technique was emerging.

Kruckenhauser began to analyze the change and, in so doing, created a fairly modern teaching method. Known in



St. Christoph's Bundesheim, an entire facility—buildings, mountain, staff—devoted to teaching Austria's ski instructors, was Kruckenhauser's Vatican.

English as the New Austrian System, the core of the technique became known in Austria as *kurzschrünger* ("short-swing"), a series of abbreviated parallel turns in the fall line, one turn blending into the next and leaving a snake-like track. It was popularly known as *wedeln* (Austrian for "wagging").

Wedeln was such a spectacular and sexy way of skiing that the word came to stand for this new way of skiing. But the technique was much more than "wagging"; it included turns from long to short adapted for every kind of terrain and snow and every kind of skier.

Remembrances

I was 15 years old when I first met Professor Kruckenhauser in 1954. It was during one of the many days a few of us from the Ski Club Arlberg in St. Anton were out practicing slalom. We were four young skiers—Karl Schranz, Ernst Falch, Alfred Tschol, and I. We were all about the same age, and we routinely skied together.

For us, skiing was as natural as breathing—we didn't give a thought to what we were actually doing. We were, however, intent on developing a racing technique like the champions. Whenever the opportunity presented itself, we eagerly teamed up with Toni Spiss, who had become our local idol. He had been in the top 10 in international racing since 1952, when he won the giant slalom in the Oslo Olympics. We called him "Gummispiss"—the rubber man, or Rubber Spiss—and he had a skiing style that was more flexible than even that of such contemporary greats as Stein Eriksen, Othmar Schneider, and Christian Pravda.

Toni spent hours upon hours setting up long and very tight flushes. A normal flush is usually three or four gates placed vertically above one another. With Toni, we skied flushes as long as 15 vertical gates, all very close together. This was before the days of lightweight bamboo gates, and



Changing interests: College-age Krucki (left) preparing to race and, in later years (right), as a stylish—if reluctant—demonstrator. He was not noted for his skiing skills.

long before today's breakaway plastic poles. The gates were of solid wood and about two inches thick, and we all suffered bleeding knuckles and bruised forearms after a few hours of trying to ski as close to the poles as we could.

Toni linked his turns quickly to get through the gates at top speed. This didn't allow for much body movement—all the

action came from his legs. Toni also wanted to get as close to the gates as possible. Because it hurt so to hit the gates, he instinctively turned his body away from each pole, making contact with the back rather than the front of his shoulders and arms. Even more important, this let him slide by each pole more closely, shortening his track. As the skis and lower body turned left, the upper body swiveled to the right, and vice-versa. We eagerly tried to copy his moves, skiing through the gates with an extreme reverse-shoulder technique. We had no idea how revolutionary a concept this would turn out to be.

Over the previous six seasons, Kruckenhauer had been analyzing these changes. That day he stopped by in 1954, while the four of us were tackling one of Toni's practice courses, his hair was typically unruly. He reminded us of Albert Einstein. We thought of him as a school teacher—kind but strict, understanding but demanding. With camera in hand, he asked if he could film us while we practiced.

The Professor as Student

On numerous occasions he asked us to join him on the wide open slopes of the Arlberg, the purpose being to film us skiing everything from powder to hardpack. Krucki's objective was to study the way we, all young skiers who had never received any formal instruction, skied different snow conditions. Much to our delight, he brought us to some of the most spectacular slopes in the Arlberg. He saw our skiing as different. He also saw things differently, imparting from time to time such philosophical nuggets as "It is not the beginning that is difficult, it is the ending." Or "What good is a golden head," he would ask us, "without a behind of steel?"

Equipped with miles of film footage, sequenced still photography, and a sharp analytical mind, Kruckenhauer developed a teaching plan based on what he saw as a new skiing technique.

During the two winters we spent so much time with him on the slopes, he never explained to us what he was beginning to formulate in his mind, which we

assumed was based on what we were doing on skis. But he had begun to translate his observations, based on how we and other racers were now making slalom turns, into an entirely new teaching method. At its essence, it involved quickly turning the lower body and legs first to one side and then to the other in the direction of the turn while the upper body turned the opposite, or reverse, way. The Arlberg's technique's preparatory deep crouch and rotation of the arms followed by a rotation of the upper body in the direction of the turn was thus replaced by a more subtle counter-rotation of the upper body without the preparatory arm movement. When used in quick, consecutive turns, *wedeln* was much more efficient than the more cumbersome rotation of the Arlberg technique.

Birth of Interski

At mid-century, the sport of skiing was growing rapidly, and having the best teaching method became an important marketing tool for ski areas. To compare the methods of various nations, a "ski congress"—a meeting of ski schools from around the world—was organized at St. Christoph in 1951. The congress, to be held biennially in different countries and renamed Interski in 1962, would become the premier event for the world's ski nations to promote their ski techniques. It was a perfect venue for Professor Kruckenhauer. With the keen eye of a photographer and filmmaker, and an intense drive for the dramatic, his Austrian team demonstrations were spectacular. His obsession with detail, coupled with the resources of talented skiers from the Bundesheim, resulted in demonstrations of the new skiing technique that were truly astonishing. The Interski in 1955



at Val d'Isère, France, brought about the final breakthrough. Nearly all of the demonstrators were now skiing some form of the reverse. The result was a new teaching method that now enjoyed widespread recognition and acceptance among virtually all ski nations.

The new look of the quick, short turns became not only the signature of Kruckenhauser's new method of skiing but the goal of skiers everywhere. In the 1950s the little village of St. Christoph, high above the Arlberg Pass, became the place where instructors from all over the world went to rid themselves of "rotation" and master the new turn.

In 1957, Kruckenhauser published his revolutionary ideas in *Oesterreichischer Ski-Lehrplan* or "Austrian Ski-Teaching Plan." As the title indicates, Kruckenhauser had developed a teaching method that involved very distinct learning phases and drills which he skillfully portrayed. He also introduced the notion of using particular terrain, shaped for the purpose of teaching a specific exercise. The use of terrain to teach a particular component of ski technique proved to be an invaluable tool in accelerating the learning rate and enhancing the acceptance of Kruckenhauser's manual by hundreds of ski schools. A landmark in U.S. instruction was Roland Palmado's English translation, *The New Official Austrian Ski System*, in 1958.

After injuries in 1959 made the continuation of my ski racing doubtful, I enrolled in the Austrian Ski Instructor Certification School, still headed by Professor Kruckenhauser. He had developed an extensive curriculum which included many subjects, from languages to first aid, and a very strict ski-teaching protocol. His students were a diverse group—young farmers who taught skiing in the winter, the sons and daughters of ski resort hotel owners, future Olympians (Pepi Gramshammer and Pepi Stiegler, to name just two), and university students who included ski-teaching as part of their education.

To be accepted in Kruckenhauser's school, you first had to pass a skiing test, including a timed slalom run. This was not an easy task. And once accepted, you had to learn to ski using the new technique—as Professor Kruckenhauser saw it. Demonstrating a turn to his satisfaction could be a real challenge. Everything had to be perfect, from the space between your boots to the position of your knees to your hips and shoulders and arms, right down to the position of your little finger. The frequent tests to demonstrate the various skills, from the snowplow to *wedeln*, were total nightmares for students when Professor Kruckenhauser was at the bottom of the hill. To achieve an "A" was a rarity, and if you messed up, a barrage of expletives would



Kruckenhauser applied a firm hand in orchestrating the choreography of his demonstrators. The result was always an elegant show; and a breakthrough in how the subtleties of technique could be portrayed.

greet you at the end of your run. Although I later learned to recognize the twinkle in his eye that accompanied his thunder, I suspect that many Austrian instructors only remember his thunder.

Camera...Action

Along with his devotion to the school and its encompassing tasks, Kruckenhauser continued to pursue his love of film. As a student, I was fortunate to be invited a number of times to go with him and a few other students to some remote slope where we were challenged to the ultimate in synchronized deep powder skiing. Occasionally, we would chuckle at Professor Kruckenhauser and tease him about his skiing—with the old rotation. His backpack, loaded with cameras and film, forced him to resort to the old Arlberg stem christie, which he could still perform quite skillfully.

After I received my certification, I taught skiing in Stowe, Vermont. Upon returning from my second winter in the U.S. in 1962, the Professor asked me to teach English at the Bundesheim. It was during these months that I was able to interact more freely with Kruckenhauser, a time of discovering his warm and human side. With his students, he portrayed a crotchety old Prussian army officer—strict and demanding, bent on rules and regulations. However, he was really a joyful character who loved to joke and who, despite his autocratic veneer, despised rules. He was fundamentally a free spirit who hated working within the confines of government, which he rebuked as political and involving too many regulations. Above all, it bothered him to have to be accountable to someone of higher authority.

Paradoxically, the reverse shoulder had reached its peak in racing in 1952, and another technique—with feet apart

and a more square stance on the skis—was slowly evolving on the race courses while Kruckenhauser continued to re-define the *wedeln* technique. At the fifth Interski in Zakopane, Poland, in 1959 he introduced an “open stance” position, necessitating less reverse-shoulder position. This was at first met with great resistance, again. *Wedeln*, with feet glued together and a marked reverse shoulder, had become, after all, the signature of the New Austrian Technique, and the Austrian ski schools wanted to maintain that. He also introduced the *murrel-schwing* (“marmot turn”), an adaptation of the *wedeln* turn for the now-all-too-common moguls that were springing up on the world’s ski mountains. Instead of initiating the turn with an up-motion, which was a key feature of *wedeln*, the turn was begun with a quick down-motion by retracting the legs, allowing the skier to “absorb” the mogul to make a smooth turn. Again, Kruckenhauser’s skillful use of camera and film helped to convince the Austrian ski schools to finally adapt this new idea.

The French Factor

As fervent as was his dedication to advancing Austrian technique was his skepticism of the French technique. In 1963, I asked the professor why the French still accentuated the upper body while other methods relied primarily on the legs to initiate a turn. His answer: “The French are ‘sitting giants.’ When a Frenchman sits behind a table, he looks tall, yet when he stands up, he appears short. The French have a long upper body and relatively short legs—therefore, the French technique utilizes the upper body, at least in the initial stage of the turn.”

At the 1968 Interski, Kruckenhauser startled everybody with the first officially proposed wide-track maneuver, the *schnurps* turn. Again, he had watched children learning to ski on their own and taken photos and notes.

Ever the Old Fox, three years later at the ninth Interski in 1971 at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, Kruckenhauser turned things upside down again, as he seemed to do every time his star tended to dim a bit. On the first day of Interski, the Austrian demo team showed a wide stance with quick down-motion, retracting the legs to lighten the skis so they could be rotated into the turn, and then extending the legs to help the skis to continue the turn. Until then, down-unweighting, as it is called, had been reserved for expert skiers. Kruckenhauser proposed down-unweighting for the intermediate skier.

Kruckenhauser was accused of trying to divide the ski



Capturing the action, 1953: Movie or still, the Professor was a master of both.

world. In defense, he explained what he was proposing was an alternative method, not something everyone should copy. He explained it was particularly adaptable to mogul skiing, where the legs retract going over the top and then extend as the mogul drops away, the skis rising and sinking over the moguls in a wavelike fashion. A German delegate dubbed it the *wellen*, or “wave technique.” It was also a first step toward creating the pure carved turn. And carving was where skiing was going next.

In retrospect, Kruckenhauser’s ideas look even better now than they did at the time. He was ahead of everybody: “The twinkle in Professor K’s eye,” wrote one journalist at the congress, “showed that he thought

he’d moved into the future once again.”

Kruckenhauser retired in 1972. His son-in-law, Franz Hoppichler, who had married Kruckenhauser’s daughter Christine, was director of the Austrian Ski Team from 1970 to 1972. Having worked closely with Kruckenhauser, he was appointed as Kruckenhauser’s replacement at the Bundesheim, which remains a highly respected institution—and training facility for the Austrian ski team—today. He continued to search for improvements and new ideas, all under the influence and advice of the Professor, who moved to Salzburg, where he remained until he died in 1988 at the age of 83. (Hoppichler died in 1995.)

Together, they made a virtual art form of depicting ski technique with elegant black-and-white photographs using a tripod-mounted Leica, this in an era before the advent of rapid-sequence photography. Kruckenhauser’s knack was to take a single image of several superbly trained instructors, all dressed alike and each demonstrating a different phase of the turn. It was a visual teaching aid that worked because the instructors were so disciplined in their movements. The result was a body of photography that handsomely portrayed the moves that challenged ski school pupils around the world. To show how a turn developed, in Kruckenhauser’s manuals, seemed all too simple. But it was only the Professor’s creative genius that made it look that way. As Kruckenhauser once told me, “Some people call me a simplifier. But was Moses a ‘simplifier’ when he returned from Sinai with only 10 commandments?” ☼

Dixi Nohl, former ski school director at Gore Mt., N.Y., Madonna Mt. and Mad River Glen, Vt. and general manager at Burke Mt., Vt., was technical editor at Ski Magazine in the 1960s. He is today owner of the Charleston House, a bed-and-breakfast inn in Woodstock, Vt.

Bunny Down East, Jean Takes Up Soccer



BUNNY BASS Boot-Maker

Robert "Bunny" Bass had a busy decade in the 1950s. He spent it running his family's boot and shoe business and helping to found Sugarloaf Mountain, both in Maine, and assisting in the launch of Ski Industries America (SIA).

Bunny was born Aug. 23, 1917, a grandson of George Henry Bass, who founded the G.H. Bass shoe factory in Wilton, Maine, in 1876. Bunny's older brother George dubbed him with his nickname for the way he looked as a toddler in Dr. Denton's one-piece pajamas. The name stuck with him for life, even onto the hockey rink and football field at Deerfield Academy, when he was an all-state tackle.

The Bass boys were taught to ski by their uncle, Willard Bass, a mathematician who skied for Bowdoin College and went on to earn masters degrees by age 20 in math and chemistry at Harvard. After teaching in Chicago for a few years, Willard returned to Wilton to

help run the shoe company, and there he launched the first Bass ski boot in 1934 by putting a square toe on one of the factory's mainstays, a stiff logger's boot. The boot was supplied to American skiers competing at the 1936 Olympics in separate models for jumping, cross-country, and downhill skiing.

Bunny graduated from Bowdoin in 1940 and went on to Harvard Business School. The following year he was one of 250 HBS students to enroll in the Navy's Officer Candidate School at Dartmouth. At the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, he was working in the Lend-Lease office as a liaison to the Russian, French, and British navies. He then served as a gunnery officer on the USS Phoenix, a light cruiser operating with the Seventh Fleet in the Philippines and Papua, New Guinea.

"We were a lucky ship," he recalls. "We worked with the Australian Navy covering amphibious landings and saw plenty of action, but in two years we lost only one crewman in combat." At war's end, Bass turned down a promotion to lieutenant commander and returned to the shoe factory in Wilton, where brother George was the president and production chief. Bunny served as treasurer and head of sales. In 1948 he married Martha Lord of Augusta, Maine.

In 1950, Bunny joined the Maine Ski Council, which was trying to develop a ski area at remote Mt. Katahdin. "Amos Winter directed us to Sugarloaf, pointing out that it was a lot more accessible and had a perfect exposure and pitch for alpine skiing," Bass says. "Sel Hannah came over from New Hampshire to help lay out the trail system, and we cut trails beginning that year. We bought a T-bar from Ernest Constan in 1952." Bunny served as

president of the Sugarloaf Mountain Corp. for 10 years.

By this time, G.H. Bass was one of the leading suppliers to the nascent American ski industry, selling some 5,000 pairs of ski boots each winter. The company's chief rival was Beconta Corp., under Jim Woolner and Karl Wallach, who imported Nordica. In 1953, Bass joined with Woolner, attorney Jim Weinstein, Henry Barreca, and a few others to found the trade association that would become Ski Industries America (SIA). He was SIA's second president.

Even with the success of SIA, G.H. Bass had to compete with a flood of good ski boots from Europe. Bass began importing European-made boots—a good example was the Bass Internationale, made by Munari in Italy. Later, Bass became the U.S. distributor for Swiss-made Raichle boots. By 1968 it was clear that the future belonged to plastic boots, so Bass bought the Rosemount factory in Minnesota and also took on distribution of the new, equally radical honeycomb-core Hexcel ski. With Splitkein nordic skis and a skiwear line, Bass Sports constituted a small conglomerate, large enough to stand on its own. In 1972, when Raichle set up its own U.S. subsidiary, Bass Sports was sold to its general manager, Butch Wieden. The family sold the shoe company in 1978 to Chesebrough-Pond, the maker of Vaseline, and since 1986 the shoe company has been a division of Philips-Van Heusen.

Bunny served as executive director of the Maine Society of CPAs until retiring. Now 88, he and Martha now live in Portland, Me. —Seth Masia

Continued next page



(Above) Olympic torch-bearer Saubert, 2002. (Right) Olympic medal-bearer Saubert, 1964.



JEAN SAUBERT Olympian Teacher

Ask Jean Saubert what she's most proud of, and she won't mention her Olympic silver or bronze medals. The 1964 dual medalist (slalom bronze, GS silver) is most proud of the effect she has had on her students during her 33-year teaching career. "It's good to know the life you lead is a good example," she says.

Saubert retired from teaching in 2000 and traveled to Australia to watch the summer Olympics. She then moved to Salt Lake City where she volunteered for the 2002 Olympic Games, writing athlete backgrounds for TV broadcasters. "I was a competitor and a spectator at the Olympics," she says. "It was time to be a volunteer."

Now Saubert, 62, lives in Bigfork in northwestern Montana, near her older sister Joan. Never married, Saubert says she always planned to live near her sister upon retirement. Only 16 months apart, the sisters have always been close. In fact, Saubert describes her sister as the better skier—the one with natural athletic talent. "But I'm a natural competitor," she explains. "I was always trying to beat her."

They grew up in Cascadia, Oregon, and skied at Hoodoo Ski Bowl. By ages 10-11, they were traveling to races in the Pacific Northwest. "Joan made the junior nationals when she was 13," remembers Jean. "I made them when I was 14." This was in 1957, and Jean won the slalom and combined.

While Joan focused on school, Jean split her time between studying at Oregon State University and skiing. In 1962, she raced at the World Championships, finishing sixth in giant slalom. Two years later, while Billy Kidd and Jimmy Heuga stole the Olympic show

by winning the first U.S. men's alpine skiing medals, Saubert quietly won two for herself. Was she disappointed that she wasn't included in the media hoopla? No, she was only disappointed in her slalom skiing.

"The coach [Bob Beattie] expected me to win," she explains matter-of-factly. "So my second and third finishes were disappointments rather than successes in his mind."

She skied her first run of slalom "like I was an old lady—I got in the starting gate with doubt in the first run," she says. Why? "Because Bob made me run gates at the top of the course before the race, which we never did, and he said, 'Think about your hands.' So I didn't think I was skiing my best."

Saubert doesn't blame Beattie. Only 21 at the time, she didn't have the nerve to question him. "I was taught that you do what the coach tells you to do."

"But I love my GS [silver] medal," she adds. She tied for second on a gentle course not particularly suited to her strong technical skills.

After the 1964

Olympics came the U.S. Nationals, where she swept four events. She continued skiing while doing graduate work at Brigham Young University. "I hadn't planned to continue skiing, but I was so afraid that, if I quit, the level of my skiing wouldn't come up to where it needed to. Truth is, I came down some. But I wasn't there for the right reasons. I was looking to move on."

After the 1966 World Championships, she began teaching elementary school in Vail. "Bob [Beattie] got me that job because he thought I would continue to race. He asked, if they named me to the team, would I go? I said, 'Nope!' Skiing was never my life. It was just something I did."

For the next 32 years, Jean taught school—10 years in Vail, 10 in Salt Lake City, 22 in Hillsboro, Oregon. She also played soccer in a women's over-30 league and competed in a national championship twice. Now in Bigfork, Saubert still occasionally plays for her Oregon soccer team, although she broke her wrist last time she played. She wants to sign up for an indoor soccer league, but only if the players "aren't too young or aggressive." She skis at Blacktail Mountain, plays golf, and hikes. And when her wrist heals, she wants to paddle her new kayak. — *Peggy Shinn*

Snow Conditions: Ice*



* Often referred to by resort operators as hardpack

Two Bobs In the Golden Age of Ski Humor

Cartoonists Bob Cram and Bob Bugg captured the sport's whimsical moments—the light and dark side as well.

By Morten Lund

In the last half of the last century, two of America's most popular ski cartoonists were Bob Cram and Bob Bugg. Extraordinarily skilled and dedicated artists, they both functioned—as cartoonists are supposed to—giving free rein to the humorous aspects of the sport—both the light side and the dark side. The two provided an indispensable leavening of hilarity to the serious view of the sport, lighting up both its joys and shortcomings.

Bob Cram, the younger of the two, was born in 1925 to a struggling Seattle family in which he developed a huge sense of humor to buffer his family's scarecrow-thin circumstances, occasioned by a father who was well-meaning but a consistently failing entrepreneur. Bob got his commercial art school degree solely through the fortunes of war. The family finances would not have provided his education. Yet the training gave Cram's flair for enterprise a fine playing field, and he eventually became if not rich then very well off.

At age 8, Cram was smitten with an irresistible urge to draw. He drew action sketches, mostly funny, by the hour. Spontaneous talent, plus his love affair with the sport, produced 50-some years of outstanding work, arguably the most productive career of any American ski cartoonist. He was American skiing's court jester, alluding often to what, in terms of advertiser sensitivities, might not be politic for a magazine to publish. Nonetheless, Cram's "Ski Life" series in *Ski* was the most accurate gauge of the average American alpine ski experience of the mid-20th century, a period when the ski situation called for a nonstop mixture of situational bravado, utter panic, and secret self-indulgence in view of the necessary reliance on primitive equipment and God-given snow conditions.

Learning to ski in the first place was anything but easy—even for those without monetary constraints. Cram's path was heroic. "We were not an affluent family," he says. "We were strapped all the time. My folks did not have any



The work (above), from the January 1966 issue of *Ski*. The artist (left), seriously enjoying a not-too-serious moment on the hill.

extra money for skiing." On Saturdays, he washed cars in a used car lot and waxed floors.

When he had saved enough, he went skiing. At age 13, he managed three trips on Seattle's only ski train, making the weekend journey to Milwaukee Bowl 50 miles away. The one-dollar rope tow ticket left him with a choice of no lunch or hiking up the hill. So he hiked. No lessons of course. He describes his early ski technique as three struggling turns, then fall down. He had only the vaguest notion of how skis really worked.

Off to War

Five years and several hundred falls later, Cram graduated from high school in the class of 1944. Along with every other viable male graduate, he was conscripted for the wartime Army, taken into the 66th Infantry Division, and shipped across the Atlantic. On Christmas Eve, almost within sight of Britain, a German U-boat torpedoed his troopship in the English Channel. Cram was able to scramble down a ladder onto the deck of a destroyer escort lashed alongside. Seven hundred of his fellow infantrymen went down with their ship.

WHY DO YOU SKI ? as asked by BOB CRAM



WELL, I MET
THIS DARLING INSTRUCTOR....



ITS THAT CLEAN MOUNTAIN AIR, THOSE GOOD WHOLESOME
COMPANIONS, THAT EXERCISE !!!

From Skiing, October 1960.

Come the invasion, the 66th was assigned to surround the German troops guarding submarine pens on the Brittany coast, making sure the enemy did not break out. The Germans were happy to oblige and, after the armistice in May 1945, walked out with their hands up. By a stroke of luck, Cram was transferred to a military police unit in Salzburg. He spent the winter of 1945-46 learning to ski properly at nearby Zell-am-See in the capable hands of Hans Pichler, who had been one of the original instructors when the Sun Valley ski school had opened nine years earlier. "He taught me pure Arlberg," says Cram. "I could rotate right out of my boots! By the time I got home in 1946, I was a pretty good skier."

Cram entered the brand new Burnley School of Art and Design in Seattle. "I used every bit of my GI Bill," he says. "It gave me four years." And he met his future wife Martha skiing on the hill outside Seattle run by the Mountaineers, a climbing and skiing club. Once a year thereafter, Cram proposed marriage and Martha demurred, saying she was too young.

Waiting for Martha to succumb, Cram sold his first published ski cartoons while still an undergraduate at Burley, earning about \$6 each in today's money. The buyer, Merrill Hastings, was publishing *National Skiing*, the precursor of *Skiing* magazine. In 1950, Bob graduated and the same year Hastings, who had recognized Cram's work as eminently saleable, published Cram's first cartoon book. It was entitled *The Jolly Skiers*, and it sold well. Cram's satirical pen-and-ink sketches of skiing pride and prejudice resonated so hilariously with the ski public that the book boosted him on his way to his eventual status as

a leading American ski cartoonist.

Enroute, he detoured a bit to become a ski instructor. After graduation, he formed his own ski school with a friend. "We called it 'Tim and Bob's Ski School,'" says Cram. "We had a group of kids who took a bus up to Snoqualmie Pass on weekends." Two winters later, Cram went to work for Buzz

"Ski Patrol," from *The Real Skiier's Dictionary*
by Bob Cram and
Morten Lund, 1983.

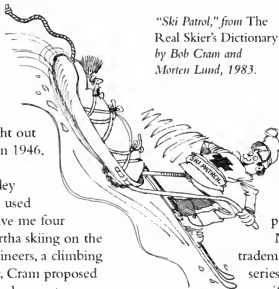
Fiorini's high-volume, urban ski school, an enterprise that was rapidly turning Seattle into the Northwest's "Ski City," busing skiers up to Snoqualmie Pass at a torrid rate. The school's unofficial motto was "Ski Like a Weenie With Buzz Fiorini" ("weenie" for "hot dog," get it?).

In 1952, Martha finally accepted Bob's annual proposal. The couple settled in Seattle, he to a career as a commercial artist and she to producing three children. In

November 1958, Cram created his trademark concept in *Skiing*, a cartoon series with several panels devoted to a specific topic. The first was entitled "Four

Types of Ski Instructors by Bob Cram," featuring a "Top-Sergeant" instructor flanking his class, the "Talker," boring his class to death, the "Boomer," leaving his class behind, and the "Lover," focusing closely on the cute chick in his class. Cram was an eight-year veteran instructor by that time and knew something of instructors' foibles.

Cram's series ran regularly in *Skiing* through December 1962, an exposure that made him the leading ski cartoonist in America at this point. The next year, he embarked on an entirely new career, appearing on television as King TV's "cartooning weatherman," in effect a performance artist



adding a graphic dimension to the talking-head weather reporter—technology had not yet come up with a rear-projection weather report screen with its gyrating clouds and storm fronts.

Cram wasted no time getting his own show—a ski show. “That same year,” he says, “I talked the program director into doing a TV show called *Skinanny*”—a word-play on “hootenanny” the popular name for a country music jam.

During the next eight years, Cram filmed 100 *Skinanny* shows on the joy of the Northwest slopes as well as a few of the more distant Rockies and Intermountain slopes. He skied with Stein Eriksen at Snowmass and with Toni Sailer at Whistler. He did shows with Art Furrer and Roger Staub. Toward the end of a 25-year career on King TV, Cram had the highest visibility of anyone in the Northwest ski industry. “More and more people were tuning in to it,” he says. “It was getting pretty good ratings. People would come up to me and say, ‘You’re Bob Cram, aren’t you? I grew up watching your show and it got me really interested in skiing.’”

As if that weren’t enough of a boost to the early phases of the alpine sport, Cram maintained a parallel national career in ski cartooning. Beginning with *Ski*’s October 1964 issue, he began drawing multi-panel, single-subject cartoon stories again, continuing through 1966 when he collaborated with

Bob Bugg in a feature called “Dear Bob” in which he and Bugg traded cartoons and commentary for seven pages.

In 1967, Cram’s multi-panel feature became “Ski Life with Bob Cram.” Three years later, Paper House in Denver published *Here Come the Skiers*, a collection of Cram cartoons from *Ski* and *Skiing*. He celebrated by buying a small condo at the bottom of Warm Springs in Sun Valley, whose rapidly rising value boosted his net worth considerably.

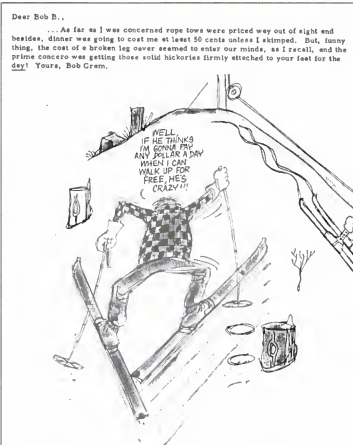
Airlines Spoof Draws Fire

In 1971, Cram did a multi-panel story for *Ski* on “Airlines Week,” depicting some fairly forward shenanigans between flight captains and stewardesses. A storm of protest followed from adults still promoting skiing to their kids as an alternative to the lascivious excesses of the Sixties, even though—as noted in “Skiing History Through Ski Cartooning” in *SKIING HERITAGE*’s Fourth Issue 1999—“it was perfectly clear that resorts were headed over the rainbow and it wasn’t Kansas anymore.”

In 1971, Cram ended his *Skinanny* TV show to focus on commercial art—and win a slew of advertising awards in the bargain. But the golden age of cartooning was passing. The demand for cartoons slackened as the sport began to revolve around money and prestige more than the joy of it all. However, Cram did manage a fine burst of cartooning in 1983, collaborating with this writer in *The Real Skier’s Dictionary*, in



A racy-for-the-times cartoon from Cram’s “Airlines Week,” November 1971 *Ski*. Parents were not amused.



From the “Dear Bob” series, Cram’s exchange of letters and cartoons with Bob Bugg in the January 1966 issue of *Ski*.



"Lifeline" was one of four sketches to grace Bugg's first cover for *Ski*, November 1959.

the mode of the "real dictionary" craze of the 1980s.

Cram published his third and last cartoon book at 74, appropriately entitled *How to Tell If You Are an Ancient Skier*, a limited edition issued in 1999 to the members of the Northwest's Ancient Skiers club. In 2003, Cram was inducted into the Ancient Skiers' Northwest Ski Hall of Fame—along with Leif Oddmark, Jack Nagel, and Martin Fopp. He and Martha still vacation at Sun Valley.

Although Bob Cram had a wicked sense of humor that looked mayhem square in the face, his contemporary, Bob Bugg, spent nearly 40 years producing ski cartoons on the gentle, sly side. Bugg was essentially a private person, but with a subtle, biting wit. Rather than excelling as did Cram in stand-alone cartoons, Bugg's great success was as humorous illustrator, an "atmosphere artist" able to evoke the spirit of an accompanying article with sure, deft strokes.

Bob Bugg was born in Summit, New Jersey, and grew up in affluent Larchmont, New York. His father was a New York City advertising executive for whom it was no stretch to provide his son with ski lessons and ski trips. At age 14, Bugg skied the first U.S. rope tow at Woodstock, Vermont, soon after it opened in 1934. Already showing signs of talent, he did posters and other artwork that his grade school needed. By the time he graduated from Mamaroneck High School in 1938, he had become a reasonably good skier and passable amateur graphic artist.

He studied for two years at the Art Students' League in

New York City. Then World War II came along and he spent three and a half years in the U.S. Army. After the war, he set up a studio in New York City and sold illustrations for articles to magazines such as *Colliers*, *Woman's Day*, and *Family Circle*, as well as advertising art for national companies. By 1955, he had married his wife Pat and moved to New Canaan, Connecticut, then beginning to turn into a rural retreat for New York City's executive class.

Bugg was known among his ski friends for his ability to thread flawlessly down the steep slopes of Mt. Mansfield in Stowe, Vermont. "His favorite place was Ten Acres," says David Rowan, *Ski*'s associate publisher during the 1950s and early 1960s and a Bugg ski companion for many years. "He preferred off-the-beaten-trail stuff. So skiing with Bob meant skiing the Goat, which he could ski very well. He wasn't a foolhardy skier. He was always maddeningly in control, no matter how difficult it was."

Fear of Flying

Bob Bugg was the kind of Woody Allen character about whom friends inevitably create a minor mythology around his daily flow of spontaneous, low-key wit. Though he lived in Republican country all his life, Bugg maintained a tendency toward high sarcasm about the sorry state of the world at the hands of the moneyed. He joked about living cheek-by-jowl with the plutocrats of New Canaan.

"He was a huge hypochondriac," says Rowan, "and he had a real fear of flying." Tommie Hardy, wife of his late golf partner, recalls "We flew with him to the Bahamas. We had to oil him up in the bar at LaGuardia to even get him on to the plane."

Charley Murphy, one of his golf foursome for 20 years, says, "Bob without realizing it was the embodiment of what he drew—he could speak in cartoon captions. The four of us would go out early on Saturdays and Sundays. We came in once and walked by these men and women playing together. Bob turned to the three of us and said, 'I don't know how anyone could play golf with women. Who could hold their stomachs in for eighteen holes?'"

He would send out humorous, hand-drawn birthday cards—many still hang framed in homes in New Canaan. His lifelong friendships were bonded in frequent martini-spiked bouts right out of the quintessential 1920s. A true '20s personality, Bugg loved his cocktails and smoked heavily all his life, a habit that ultimately led to his death in 1993 at the age of 73.

During the 1960s, from his studio in New Canaan, Bugg illustrated paperback covers, advertising layouts, and occasional newspaper and magazine illustrations. David

Rowan says, "I first noticed Bob's work when he did a cover for the magazine section of the *New York Herald Tribune*. It was divided into quadrants, showing the evolution of sport--and there was a skier in it. The skier was obviously drawn by somebody that knew what skiing was all about. Just on the spur of the moment, I got in touch with Bugg and asked, 'Could you do the same sort of thing on the history of skiing?' He said, 'I'd love to.'"

Bob Bugg created his first work for *Ski* in a November 1959 cover showing the sport's progress from primitive bow-hunting on skis to modern lift lines—45 years later, it still rates as a first-rate piece of magazine art. Thereafter Bugg became a regular in *Ski* as an illustrator and, occasionally, as a spot cartoonist. Rowan then assigned Bugg to illustrate an essay on Europe—and he turned in seven pages of evocative watercolors on "The Alps," appearing in the October 1960 issue of *Ski*. It remains one of the high points of illustrative art in ski periodicals.

Sometime in the 1960s, Bugg's magazine and advertising clients began to thin out, so he took on the job of drawing the "Dennis the Menace" cartoons under the name of the series originator, Mort Walker, for the Sunday newspapers. It was work that was not very satisfactory artistically but it was bread and butter for 12 years. It gave him time to do the cartoons he loved to draw but which, in view of the modest size of the ski industry, never paid on the scale of the big national publications.

Bard's Touch

Another early appearance in *Ski* came in the March 1961 issue, in which Bugg illustrated selected Shakespearean quotes with appropriate ski scenes, a rather high reach for a ski magazine but Bugg brought it off artfully. One memorable panel showed three skiers sweating out an exhausting backcountry climb under full pack to illustrate “Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,” from *Henry V*.

Typical of Bugg's work as an illustrator was his opening-page illustration for "Thrombosis Slope" in the November 1961 issue of *Ski*, a beleaguered but touchingly braver skier surviving a blizzard set the scene for an accompanying story about the impossible ski conditions of Scotland. In January 1963, Bugg turned in another seven-page sketchbook, this time on the Eastern Slope of New Hampshire's White Mountain range. As good as his first essay on the Alps, it was also his last published ski watercolor.

In *Ski's* February 1965 issue, Bugg created the opening cartoon illustration for a journalistic coup, best-selling author Leon Uris' article "Heatherbedlam" about the informal-to-a-fault Aspen Highlands' Heatherbed Inn. At the time, John Fry, who had taken on the editorship of *Ski*, assigned Bugg to create what turned out to be superb, technically perfect drawings for the magazine's popular "Ski Pointer" pages.

And in the 1970s, Bugg began illustrating covers for David Rowan's *Ski Area Management*—covers that spoofed such otherwise sober subjects such as risk management, the problems of



The instruction-method-challenged area manager (above) was the cover subject of the Spring 1976 issue of Ski Area Management. Bugge's May 1993 snow-is-fun cover for SAM (below) was his last.



lift lines, slope grooming, and lift exit design. Bob Bugg's tie to *SAM* continued to May 1993, a few months before his death, when he produced a cover showing all the ways to have fun on the slopes. In a eulogy in *SAM*'s November issue that year, Rowan wrote about Bugg that "...his artwork has had a greater impact on the ski world than that of any other artist." Bugg's last cartoon cover was a warm, heartfelt bouquet to the sport he loved.

He will undoubtedly be remembered for his poster on the Skier's Responsibility Code, which he did for the

HEY! YOU GUYS SAID IT WAS
MY TURN INSIDE AFTER WE
PASSED BENNINGTON!"



By Bob Bugg, January 1966 *Ski*

age of the sport conjured up by the drawings of Bob Cram and Bob Bugg may be pardoned for feeling they may have been there for the best of it. ✱

National Ski Areas Association as one of his many *pro bono* contributions to the sport.

Great cartoonists no longer populate the ski periodicals. The sport now revolves less about the fun of it all and more about prestige, sophistication, and high-risk skiing. Skiing has become "the product," sold with mirthless professionalism. Those who skied in the lighter mood of the less self-conscious

MUSEUM NEWS

The **New England Ski Museum** has received some interesting donations of late, including the wooden Northland skis that Ralph Miller used to set an unofficial world speed record (107mph) at Portillo in 1955, an early Milty bi-ski for handicapped skiers, and a large collection of photographs from *Skiing* magazine.

At this writing, the museum was assembling a panel of speakers for the Ski Legends Weekend March 5-6 at the Mt. Washington Hotel at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, as prelude to the ninth annual Hannes Schneider Meister Cup Race at Mt. Cranmore March 12-13. Among those expected to attend the race weekend are the family of Toni Matt and the mayor of Stuben, Austria. The Carroll Reed Cup, to be awarded for the first time, will be presented to the first-place team made up of ski industry personnel. The 10th Mountain Division Cup will be presented to the fastest team of military skiers.

Last November, the **Mammoth Ski Museum** (Mammoth Lakes, Calif.) unveiled its "Fine Art of Skiing: Part II" exhibit along with an accompanying exhibit entitled "SkiSport: A Visual Evolution of Early European Skiing." Both exhibits, reports executive director TJ Chase, have been well received by the public and give visitors an in-depth look into the vastness of the Beekley Collection.

In December, the museum hosted another of its Book Club and Lecture Series programs with Mammoth founder Dave McCoy. The evening was emceed by historian Robin Morning and took a look at the early days of Eastern Sierra skiing. More than 275 people attended.

In early February, a modern exhibit of snowboard art entitled "The Progress Report" was unveiled. A tribute to the late snowboarder Jeff Anderson, the exhibit captures the spirit of the sport through a variety of media.

In March, the museum will host an evening with Warren Miller and premier Miller's latest film, *Impact*. In early April, the second chapter of the Dave McCoy story will debut with photos and stories about Mammoth's "golden years" (1955-69).

The **Alf Engen Ski Museum Foundation**, in conjunction with Olympic Parks of Utah, has begun work on the 2002 Olympic Winter Games museum, which will occupy the second floor of the Joe Quinney Winter Sports Center. The museum is scheduled to be completed in May 2005.

The foundation is also working on a new permanent exhibit entitled "Silver Ore to White Gold." It is being designed to help visitors understand the relationship between early-day mining and present-day skiing in Utah.

The Poster Craze Continues

Auction action at Swann's and Christie's produces some surprising sellers.

By John Fry

If you own, love, or collect vintage ski posters, know this: Authentic original posters—not contemporarily printed copies, but the real first-edition McCoys—remain a sound investment, particularly if the images are executed by top-drawer artists and if the overall graphic

design of the poster is striking. Classically beautiful graphics by skilled painters, mostly from Europe, continue in strong demand and command healthy prices. Old

Sun Valley and Dartmouth Winter Carnival posters are hot

values. Not so hot in the poster auction marketplace, unless they are rare specimens, are weakly executed designs by second-tier artists, often originally produced to sell equipment or to flog vacation packages.

The trends are evident in two major auctions of authentic ski posters—at Swann Galleries in New York City and at Christie's in London—that took place this winter. Swann Galleries' sixth annual winter Vintage Posters sale on February 3 featured an estimated 120 ski posters, including eight Dartmouth Winter Carnival images from 1939 to 1954.

Such posters often are avidly coveted by the university's alumni. The highest priced—a 1947 Winter Carnival poster—sold for \$5,290; two others sold for \$4,830 each.

The highest price fetched by



This poster promoting Cortina, Italy and created by artist Mario Puppo in 1938, sold for \$5,980. It tied for the highest price paid at this year's Swann Galleries auction.

any of the posters in the Swann auction, at \$5,980 each, was for two outstanding European images—a strikingly designed poster by the artist Mario Puppo promoting Cortina, Italy, in 1938, and a three-foot by two-foot classic snow and mountain scene by Walter Koch, created for the Schonfels Grand Hotel, Zugerberg, Switzerland. The Cortina poster sold well above its pre-auction estimate; the Koch poster below.

Dwight Shepler's popular Sun Valley painting of skiers in action and sitting on the deck of the mountaintop Roundhouse (which appears on the cover of this issue of SKIING HERITAGE) sold for \$2,990. A less attractive, but rare poster by Phil von Phul, *Sun Valley/Let's Go/Union Pacific*,



Mt. Washington poster, a 1940 Herbert Matter painting/photo that features Hans Thoner on skis, sold for \$4,830.



(Left) Dartmouth 1947 Winter Carnival poster by D.B. Leigh sold for \$5,290. (Center) Artist Sascha Maurer was well represented at Swann's with several posters for Flexible Flyer/Splitkein. (Right) Maurer's "Winter Sports New England" from the ISHA collection sold for \$2,760.



c.1940, sold for more—\$4,600, well above the pre-auction estimate of \$2,000–\$3,000.

Sascha Maurer, America's most celebrated poster designer, was represented by three pieces that he executed for Flexible Flyer Splitkein skis, plus a 1938 Lake Placid poster. His *Winter Sports New England*, created for the New Haven Railroad, came from the collection of the International Skiing History Association and sold for \$2,760, generating welcome revenue for the cause of ski history.

An unusual early-1940s poster promoting the Hans Thorner Swiss Ski School at Pinkham Notch, N.H.—part photograph, part painting by Herbert Matter—sold for \$4,830.

Most of the Swann posters were purchased by phone bidders. While the bidding was described as "active," 30 out of 120, or one-quarter of the posters on display, remained unsold at the end of the auction. The average price of a ski poster sold at Swann was \$1,233. About half of the posters sold for under \$2,000. Three dozen posters sold for under \$1,000, several sold for as little as \$800, and two sold in the neighborhood of \$500. Who says

original ski posters are unaffordable?

Christie's Classics

The venerable auction house, Christie's, gathered together no less than 450 vintage ski posters for its eighth annual Ski Sale on March 3 at

South Kensington gallery in London. (Prices realized in the auction were not available at the time SKIING HERITAGE went to press.)

Christie's auction mostly featured classic posters created before World War II, promoting ski resorts, hotels, and winter vacations in the Alps. The skill of the artists and the scenes—of Wengen, Klosters, St. Moritz, Davos, Chamonix—are superior to all but a few posters ever created for North American resorts.

Remarkably, the pre-auction estimates for the London-sold posters in many cases looked less pricey than those auctioned in New York. U.S. prices, meanwhile, may have become attractive to Europeans because of the precipitous fall of the dollar.

Among the poster artists whose work appeared in the London show were Willy Trapp, Hugo Laubi, Burkhard Mangold, and Gaston Gorde.

For more information on ski posters generally, visit www.skiinghistory.org. Reproductions of some of the posters in the Beekley Collection at Mammoth Lakes, California, can be purchased, unframed, for \$30 and \$40. For information, visit www.vintageski-world.com.*



Steve Bradley's c.1935 stylized image of Dick Durnance for Gerber Brothers sporting goods store, estimated at \$800–\$1,200, went unsold.

High Times at the Harriman

Once famous for America's most difficult downhill, Sun Valley's Harriman Cup inspired with drama, skill, and character.

By Dick Dorworth

Between 1937 and 1965 there were few more prestigious ski races in America than the Harriman Cup. When Averell Harriman opened Sun Valley in December 1936 he decided to host a ski race that season, the Sun Valley Open International Tournament, in conjunction with the 1937 U.S. National Alpine Championships, originally been scheduled for Mt. Washington, New Hampshire.

The "open" category, in that time when professional (i.e. ski instructors) and amateur athletes were segregated, included the professionals, most of them European mountain boys. (Some came seeking adventure in Depression-era America, and a few even returned and fought for Nazi Germany.)

Only amateurs could compete for National titles, but everyone competed for Open prizes. The Harriman Cup went to the winner of the downhill/slalom combined in the Open category. (Eventually, the Sun Valley Open International Tournament name was dropped in favor of the Harriman Challenge Cup.)

Boulder Mountain Inaugural

The first race was held March 13-14, 1937 on Boulder Mountain north of Sun Valley. Competitors took three hours to hike up the the three-and-a-half-mile-long downhill course and it took just over five minutes for the leaders to complete the run. Forty-four men started the race and 39 finished, and dogsleds were used to remove the injured. Few except the eventual winner had any hope an American could win, but U.S. National and collegiate champion Dick Durrance beat ex-world champion Walter Prager by more than 20 seconds. (In fairness, Prager was coaching at Dartmouth and not in training.)



Winners all: Sally Neidlinger, Andrea Mead Lawrence, Stein Eriksen, and Christian Pravda at the finish of the 1953 Harriman Cup—a race of superlatives, not all of them positive.

The next day, Durrance won the slalom by three seconds. Harriman was so pleased that he renamed Boulder Mountain "Durrance Mountain." (Today Durrance Mountain is a favorite of backcountry skiers. Last winter, Presidential hopeful John Kerry climbed up Durrance with his snowboard in two and a half hours and boarded back down in far more time than five minutes.) Harriman awarded Durrance a replica of the Cup. The original was to stay in Sun Valley until someone won it three times.

The cup itself was a Revere-style silver bowl. The first name engraved on its side is "Dick Durrance 1937"; the last names are "Ingemar Stenmark 1977" and "Lise-Marie Morerod 1977." Suzi Harmon Gillis McLeod, who placed fourth in downhill and fifth in slalom in 1952, wrote of the Harriman Cup, "Grown men have shed surreptitious tears losing it and women have cried winning it."

Indeed, in 1938 the Harriman included both sexes. The first women's winner, Grace Lindley, wrote: "The first Sun Valley Open races for women have set a precedent and a high standard for future ladies' competitions in this country. For the first time, the heretofore 'Short Subjects' on the big racing programs have now attained equal significance and attention. We were ready for the difficulties of the first schuss, having seen all the men come down—many in the first flight fighting for balance and *vorlage*—the angle being extremely deceptive in the bad light and heavy snowfall." As Arnold Lunn would later write in the *British Ski Year Book*, "Kathleen Starrett was running with great skill and courage, up in the first 10, when she took three

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double somersaults in the transition of the schuss in the big gully! Her collision with the finishing post, the only accident of the day, unfortunately put her out of the slalom.”

A young Spokane girl, Gretchen Kunigk, who had trained under Otto Lang on Mt. Rainier, took third in the 1938 Harriman Cup downhill and fourth in the slalom. Ten years later, Gretchen Kunigk Fraser won the Olympic slalom in St. Moritz, the first American to capture an Olympic medal in alpine skiing. Though Dick Durrance lost the 1938 downhill to Ulli Beutter of Bavaria and the slalom to his old rival Prager, he captured the combined again.

In 1939 the downhill was moved to the Warm Springs side of Bald Mountain on a course Durrance had scouted, designed, and helped cut. Nevertheless, Durrance, who had not taken his training seriously enough, could do no better than sixth in the downhill, fourth in slalom, and fourth in the combined.

In 1940, Durrance trained all winter. “I realized if I didn’t win it this time,” he said of his chances for a third victory in the combined, “I probably never would.” But he was wrong. Durrance came back stronger than ever in 1940.

In every ski race, there is drama and the unfolding and expansion of human skill and character, but some races provide new standards, great stories, and the inspiration that comes from those who push limits the farthest. The 1940 Harriman was such a race because of Durrance. It is described in *The Man on the Medal*, Dick’s wonderful memoir written with John Jerome. He took the Warm Springs *Steilhang* straight and remembers the moment: “I was heading straight down. At that point I do remember the fear of God sweeping over me, and I started talking to myself—Whoa, this is too fast. I was cussing in German and English. This is bad, I’m in trouble. But there was no choice—I had to take it straight.” Durrance came off the *Steilhang* with too much speed to hold his line. He swung wide into a grove of small trees, knocking one of them down and himself as well, but he managed to get back up without losing too much speed. Durrance said of the moment, “At that point, I says, *Himmel*, you’re a lucky son-of-a-gun. I was amazed—I must have been going pretty fast through those trees—and I said to myself, ‘You’ll never be so lucky again, so you might as well let ‘er go from here.’ I didn’t slow down at all, but rode it straight every bit of the way.” Durrance fell at the bottom of Warm Springs and walked across the finish, but he still won the race over his old rival Prager by more than three seconds.

Motion pictures of Dick after he “let ‘er go” show that he was moving very fast, in the 60–70mph range, extreme velocity for the equipment of the time. (A few years later, when he was general manager of the Aspen Ski Company, Durrance cut several runs on Ajax Mountain wider than any other runs in America so that “people could choose their own line down.” It’s not too much of a stretch to imagine that his 1940 Harriman downhill run contributed to his championing the double-wide ski run. Nor is it out of the question that Dick’s “let ‘er go” attitude influenced and set a tone for subsequent American ski racers. Friedl Pfeifer beat Dick in the slalom, but Durrance won the combined for the third time. (Only one other skier, Austria’s Christian Pravda, was ever able to win the Harriman three times.)

Though local Sun Valley lore has always held that the youngest female winner of the Harriman was 18-year-old Andrea Mead in 1950, 15-year-old Marilyn Shaw of Stowe, Vermont was in fact the youngest winner in 1940, capturing the combined by placing second in downhill and third in slalom. It was no fluke. Shaw was a member of the 1940 U.S. Olympic Team (short-circuited by World War II) and went on to win the National Slalom Championship the following year, 1941, at Aspen.

The 1942 downhill was moved to the other side of Bald Mountain and dropped down Canyon and River Run. It, and the combined, were won by America's Barney McLean (Gordy Wren of Steamboat Springs won the slalom). The women's events were cancelled. A casualty of World War II, the Harriman was not held between 1942 and 1947.

In 1947 the Harriman was "joyously revived," in the words of Suzi McLeod, and moved back to Warm Springs. The downhill and combined were won by the Swiss world champion Edi Rominger, the slalom by Barney McLean. The great French racer Georgette Thiollière (fourth in the 1948 Olympic slalom, third in the 1950 FIS World Championship downhill) won the downhill by five seconds and the slalom by one second, just ahead of Gretchen Fraser. Fifteen-year-old Andrea Mead placed fifth in downhill, seventh in slalom and sixth in the combined.

1948: A Reddish Sweep

The year 1948 was Jack Reddish's year. One of the finest ski racers in American history, Reddish won a difficult downhill by finishing more than five seconds ahead of the gregarious Canadian, Yves Latreille. Then he won the slalom by more than three seconds over Barney McLean. It was the first of five times that Reddish would place among the first three in the Harriman Cup. Only one other racer, Jannette Burr, was ever among the first three in five Harrimans.

The 1949 races were held on Olympic Run's challenging terrain. Henri Oreiller, who had won two gold medals and one bronze in the previous year's Olympics, won everything. Lucienne Couette-Schmitt also made it a sweep among the women. Yvan Taché, along with Latreille, were the French-Canadian "Gold Dust Twins." They were *bon vivants* known as much for their off-mountain revelry as for their fine skiing. Both taught skiing for Sun Valley at that time. "We were young and horny," says Taché, "and the Lodge was full of women. It was a great time to be a ski instructor, but [ski school director] Otto Lang wouldn't let us off work to train, so we got just one run on the downhill before the race." Taché, who was 14th in the 1948 downhill and 18th in 1949, despite a fall that tore up several leg muscles and pre-



Gretchen Fraser, 1941 Harriman winner, presents Christian Pravda with the famous Revere-style bowl after his downhill/combined victory in 1953.

vented him from racing in the slalom, says, "Those downhills were really rough, really long [the winning time was 2:54.0 in 1949]—the Harriman was just a hard race."

The next year, 1950, was a landmark year for the Harriman. The men's downhill was changed to start from the top of Baldy and descend Ridge, Rock Garden, Exhibition, and Lower River Run, the classic route it would follow in the years thereafter. The women's course began at Round House and went down Olympic. Hans Nogler, an Austrian ski instructor in Sun Valley, scored one of the biggest upsets in Harriman Cup history by defeating world and Olympic champion Zeno Colo in the downhill. François Baud won the slalom, but Nogler won the combined. Eighteen-year-old Andrea Mead swept the downhill, slalom, and combined.

The great Canadian racer Ernie McCulloch won the Harriman combined in 1951 and 1952. A well-known Canadian instructor who had produced and starred in early instruction films, he would later become an author and columnist for *Ski Magazine*. "Ernie was a tough downhiller, the best we had," says Yvan Taché. "The tougher the course, the faster he went."

In the 1951 Harriman downhill, University of Utah skier Darrell Robison took sixth in the combined, second in the slalom and eleventh in the downhill, despite breaking the belt on his pants coming off Exhibition and finishing the toughest downhill in America in his underwear with his pants piled around his boot tops. Nelson Bennett, head of the Sun Valley ski patrol in the 1940s and 1950s, said of Robison, "His pants fell down right where the most spectators were on the south slopes at the top of River Run. The crowd loved it."

At the banquet during the twelfth Harriman Cup in



(Left) Austria's Putzi Frandl and Toni Sailer, 1957. (Right) America's Buddy Werner and Linda Meyers, 1963.



1952, slalom winner Mary Jane Marin presented the first Jim Griffith Award to Jack Reddish. Griffith,

what might have come. "It took him quite a while to get it together as a ski racer," says Yvan Taché, "He was always the fastest and bravest skier. He schussed everything, but in the races he always finished seventh or eighth—but he really came on in the early '50s."

Buek was seriously injured in a motorcycle wreck a couple of months after the 1953 Harriman and never regained peak form, despite winning the 1954 National Championship downhill with a back brace and a leg that barely would bend.

A 16-year-old Steamboat Springs boy, Bud Werner, tied for eighth in his first Harriman downhill in 1953. Andrea Mead Lawrence won the downhill. The next day's slalom, won by the incomparable Stein Eriksen, was held in perfect weather. Sally Neidlinger beat Andrea Mead Lawrence in the women's slalom. Pravda won the first of his three Harriman combineds, and Andrea Mead Lawrence won the second of her two Harriman combineds.

European racers completely dominated the 1955 Harriman Cup. Austria's Martin Strolz (who went on to create one of the world's most popular ski boots) won the men's downhill. Martin Julen of Switzerland won the slalom. And Anderl Molterer, the dashing "Blitz from Kitz," won the combined. The women's downhill and combined was won by Madeline Berthod, who a year later would win Olympic gold in downhill for Switzerland. The slalom was won by Austria's Thea Hochleitner.

1956: Smith Takes It Straight

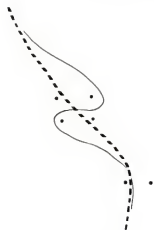
The year 1956 was almost the year of the Americans. Except for one Austrian male and one Norwegian male, every competitor was American. However, the Austrian was Christian Pravda, who won both the downhill and slalom by seven seconds over his closest competitor, Tom Corcoran. The races were held in splendid weather in soft-snow spring conditions, contributing to the fact that 18

1953: The Cup Takes a Toll

The 1953 Harriman Cup was a race of superlatives. The fastest. The most dangerous. The worst weather. The most injuries. The toughest field. The downhill was run in a driving blizzard with fewer gates than usual on Exhibition. Christian Pravda won, followed by Dick Buek, Ralph Miller, and Othmar Schneider.

There were many falls and serious injuries. It might have been worse. According to Nelson Bennett, gates were placed on Rock Garden for the first time because Pravda was seen practicing a line through some trees that was very fast. Says Bennett, "We felt Pravda could have made it, but we were concerned about some of the others, so we put gates in to slow the racers." Still, Toni Matt broke his leg so badly that he never raced again. Norm McLeod (husband of Suzi), who raced for Sun Valley but now lives in Bend, Oregon, remembers the race this way: "There were lots of falls and injuries that day. It was snowing hard and there was lots of new snow. When I was halfway down Exhibition, I was going really fast, and visibility was terrible. Suddenly there was a toboggan with a racer in it right in my line—I think it was Gene Gillis. I had to go off my line into the new snow and bumps, and I took a really hard fall that broke both my skis. I didn't break any bones, but I sure was sore and moving slow for a few days. There were wrecks all over the place."

It was likely Dick Buek's finest ski race and a portent of



Gardner Smith's path through Rock Garden gates (dotted line) was challenged, but Smith kept his bronze.

men finished the downhill and 11 did not. Reno's Gardner Smith took third in the downhill by a controversial tactic. In those days, gates were not numbered. After the schuss down Ridge there were always a few gates on Rock Garden to slow racers so they could make it under the Exhibition lift and onto the cat track leading to Round House Slope. In that race, the first two gates on Rock Garden were set in such a way that racers had to go left and turn back right to the second gate, then turn hard left back to a third gate, thus keeping velocity in check. It was a wise configuration, but course-setter Sigi Engl inadvertently set the first two gates in a perfect square. Though Engl's intention was obvious, one could be forgiven for reading the course as if the upper flags of each gate formed one gate and the lower flags another, thus allowing a racer to eliminate the two hard turns and go straight through to the third gate.

That's exactly what Gardner Smith did. He was disqualified, of course, but he protested—and the jury ruled in his favor. Engl was, to put it mildly, indignant, but Gardner, a talented, if eccentric, racer, won his bronze Harriman pin and the congratulations of fellow racers for his cunning. Sally Deaver, who two years later would place second in the World Championship giant slalom, won the downhill by nearly five seconds over Jeannette Burr and more than seven seconds over third-place Mädi Springer-Miller. Deaver also won the slalom and combined for the women. Jack Reddish came out of retirement to place third in the slalom, thus joining Burr in earning his fifth top-three Harriman placings and a diamond Harriman pin.

During the period 1955-1958, Toni Sailer won most of the races he entered. Between his three gold-medal performance in the 1956 Olympics and his three golds and a silver in the 1958 FIS World Championships, he won everything at the 1957 Harriman Cup. One day during downhill practice,

however, it momentarily appeared that the great Sailer would win nothing. When racers finished the schuss at the bottom of Exhibition, they were traveling in the 60-70 mph range, but the long run out to the finish down Lower River Run was, except for aerodynamics and the subtleties of riding a fast ski, non-technical. On one practice run, Sailer decided to eliminate the long run out and turn uphill behind the Exhibition lift to save the time of riding up the Lower River Run lift. This reasonable if seldom used tactic worked fine until he

encountered a phone line lying on top of the snow that he didn't see. His skis went under the line which boot-topped him while his body continued forward and he took a spectacular fall. Everyone who saw it was astonished and fearful that Sailer was injured. But he slowly got up, re-arranged himself and took another training run, which he finished down Lower River run. Freida Daezner of Switzerland won the women's downhill, Norway's Inger Bjornbakken won the slalom, and France's Therese Le Duc won the combined.

The 1959 Harriman was anticipated to be a contest between Pravda and America's top skier, Bud Werner. A few weeks before the Harriman, Werner had become the first American to win Austria's prestigious Hahnenkamm downhill. Werner famously said, "There are only two places in a race, first and last." After his Hahnenkamm downhill victory, he fell in the slalom in pursuit of this ethic, causing Hahnenkamm combined winner Anderl

Molterer to quip, "I didn't win the Hahnenkamm, Buddy lost it." But Buddy's strength was also his weakness. Though he was thought to be the victim of bad luck, it's fair to consider that much of Bud's hard luck was self-induced by an inflexible if admirable ethic. As expected, Werner was out to win the 1959 Harriman, but he took a line onto the top of Exhibition that he couldn't hold. He fell, assuring Pravda of the win. After the race, Pravda said, "If

Harriman Cup Winners

Year	Downhill	Slalom	Combined
1937	Dick Durrance	Dick Durrance	Dick Durrance
1938	Ulli Beutter Grace Lindley	Walter Prager Grace Lindley	Dick Durrance Grace Lindley
1939	Toni Matt Erna Steuri	Friedl Pfeifer Erna Steuri	Peter Radacher Erna Steuri
1940	Dick Durrance Grace Lindley	Friedl Pfeifer Nancy Reynolds Cooke	Dick Durrance Marilyn Shaw
1941	Sigi Engl Gretchen Fraser	Friedl Pfeifer Nancy Reynolds Cooke	Friedl Pfeifer Gretchen Fraser
1942	Barney McLean	Gordon Wren	Barney McLean
1947	Edi Rominger Georgette Thiollière	Barney McLean Georgette Thiollière	Edi Rominger Georgette Thiollière
1948	Jack Reddish Janette Burr	Jack Reddish Ann Win	Jack Reddish Suzanne Harris
1949	Henri Orellier L. Couttet-Schmitt	Henri Orellier L. Couttet-Schmitt	Henri Orellier L. Couttet-Schmitt
1950	Hans Nogler Andrea Mead	François Baud Andrea Mead	Hans Nogler Andrea Mead
1951	Verne Goodwin Rhona Wurtele	Jack Reddish Sandra Tomlinson	Ernie McCulloch Rhona Wurtele
1952	Ernie McCulloch Rhona Gillis	Hans Nogler* Mary Jane Marin	Ernie McCulloch Lois Woodworth
1953	Christian Pravda Andrea M. Lawrence	Stein Eriksen Sally Neidlinger	Christian Pravda Andrea M. Lawrence
1954	Jack Reddish Janette Burr	Tom Corcoran Janette Burr	Tom Corcoran Janette Burr
1955	Martin Strolz Madeline Berthod	Martin Julien Thea Hochleitner	Anderl Molterer Madeline Berthod
1956	Christian Pravda Sally Deaver	Christian Pravda Sally Deaver	Christian Pravda Sally Deaver
1957	Toni Sailer Frieda Daezner	Toni Sailer Inger Bjornbakken	Toni Sailer Thérèse LeDuc
1959	Christian Pravda Putzi Frandl	Christian Pravda Linda Meyers	Christian Pravda Putzi Frandl
1960	Willy Forrer Putzi Frandl	Mathias Leitner Traudl Hecher	Adrien Duvillard Marianne Jahn
1961	Bud Werner Barbara Ferries	Billy Kidd Barbara Ferries	Jimmie Heuga Barbara Ferries
1963	Bud Werner Jean Saubert	Bud Werner Jean Saubert	Bud Werner Jean Saubert
1965	Karl Schranz Marielle Goitschel	Karl Schranz Marielle Goitschel	Karl Schranz Marielle Goitschel

* Tied with Otto Von Allmen

Buddy knew what I know, no one could beat him."

Pravda won the slalom the next day to cinch his third Harriman combined and retire the cup. (After Pravda died, his son brought the cup back to Sun Valley, where it is still on display in the Sun Valley Lodge. Dick Durrance's retired cup is also still on display, at son Dave Durrance's ski shop at Aspen Highlands.)

Bud Werner finally got his Harriman win in 1961, capturing the downhill over a mostly American field. That year's Harriman Cup was a portent of things to come. Eighteen-year-old Billy Kidd won the slalom and 18-year-old Jimmy Heuga won the combined. Three years later, Kidd and Heuga would become the first American men to win medals in Olympic alpine skiing. Barbara Ferries won everything for the women in 1961, and a year later she placed third in the 1962 FIS World Championship downhill. Her brother Chuck had a Darrell Robison "experience" when he fell at the bottom of the Exhibition schuss, bounced a couple of times, and found himself on his skis and still moving. But the toe piece on his binding was broken and his boot was at an angle on the ski. Unfazed, Ferries crouched down and held the boot to the toe piece and continued to the finish line, finishing a respectable 13th.

The 1963 Harriman Cup was mostly an American event with two Canadians, a German and two Swiss. But one of the Canadians was Nancy Greene, the German was Barbi Henneberger, and the Swiss racers were Jos Minsch and Willy Favre, all among the best in the world. Werner finally had his day at the Harriman, beating Minsch, Favre, and Ferries in the downhill and besting Minsch and Bill Marolt in the slalom to win his first Harriman combined. Suzi McLeod wrote of the event, "Buddy won the first run of slalom and, with the cup all but in the bag, went all out to win

the second run. It was to be the first and last Harriman victory for America's most beloved ski racer." Werner was true to his ethic to the end. After he won the downhill he remarked, "This was a big win for me." It was his last big one. Jean Saubert beat Henneberger and Margo Walters to win the women's downhill and went on to capture the slalom by 11 seconds over Linda Meyers to take the combined.

There was a special giant slalom in conjunction with the 1963 Harriman, but it didn't count toward the combined. Minsch edged Jimmie Heuga by three-tenths of a second to win the men's event, and Henneberger beat Saubert by nearly three seconds to win the women's GS. (A little over a year later, Werner and Henneberger were killed in an avalanche in Switzerland while making a film with Henneberger's fiancé, Willy Bogner, Jr.)

There were only 20 true Harriman Cup competitions, the last in 1965. Austrian superstar Karl Schranz and the French phenom Marielle Goitschel won that year. Schranz, among the best Austrian downhill racers in history, proclaimed the Harriman "the most difficult downhill in the U.S." That would seem a fitting epitaph for one of America's great ski races and great ski racing traditions.

Sadly, those traditions, like the Roch Cup, Snow Cup, Silver Dollar Derby, Silver Belt, and other races have all been abandoned, all casualties of the demands and schedules and requirements of the newer World Cup circuit, which has so far maintained its own traditions.

A faux Harriman Cup was held in 1975 and 1977, but each consisted of a giant slalom and slalom held on Greyhawk on the Warm Springs side of Bald Mountain. Not surprisingly, Sweden's Ingemar Stenmark, who dominated slalom and giant slalom during the period, won both times. The women's winners were Liechtenstein's Hanni Wenzel in 1975 and Switzerland's Lise-Marie Moreod in 1977. But the true Harriman Cup had died 12 years earlier and the most difficult downhill in the U.S. has not been run since. ❄



Different years, different techniques. Jack Reddish (above) on the way to his 1948 Harriman Cup sweep. Stein Eriksen (below) en route to his Harriman slalom win, 1953.



Sun Valley News Bureau Photos

Sun Valley News Bureau Photos

'The Austrian Instructor'

Sepp Ruschp's genial manner and painstaking attention to detail masked an ambitious agenda and an unwavering resolution to carry it out. Mt. Mansfield and Stowe, Vermont are his legacy.

By Morten Lund

In December 1936, Sepp Ruschp journeyed from his home in Linz, Austria, a considerable city on the south side of the Danube, to the spare little village of Stowe, Vermont, at the edge of Mt. Mansfield, where he would be known at first simply as "the Austrian instructor." He was a quiet, friendly fellow with a polished manner, a personality so likable that those who met him failed to discern the drive of a world-class entrepreneur behind the trademark smile. It took a while for Sepp's meticulous, unrelenting dedication—and almost uncanny ability to attract decisive financial support—to bring Stowe and Mt. Mansfield to the head of the pack. But his leadership carried the resort to its position as the most important in American skiing, at least in an era—the 1950s—when the Northeast was the most influential U.S. region in the alpine sport.

Bill Riley, retired as Mt. Mansfield's publicity director of 20 years, says, "In every development that we did, Sepp insisted that it be done correctly and that it be done with style and class." Sepp's son Peter, current director of skiing at Mt. Mansfield, recalling a striking incident, says, "I remember when the single chair broke down on New Years Eve. They had to tear the gear box apart, and Sepp hiked up and worked with the guys that were down in the pit. He was in there keeping them company and helping them pull the bearings off. His knowledge as an engineer helped in taking the gearbox apart and putting it back together again. He went out and got some champagne to welcome in the New Year while the guys finished putting the gearbox together again." That was Sepp at a telling moment—clear crystal glass in a hand soaked in a gleaming patina of motor oil, toasting the New Year with a triumphant crew.

Beginnings

Sepp Ruschp was born November 17, 1908, to a middle-class family in Linz. His father was a railroad official but, more importantly, Herr Ruschp and his wife enjoyed skiing in the rolling hills on the other side of the Danube. Little Sepp first strapped on skis at age 8. By the time he turned



Sepp in 1948. He was general manager of the Mt. Mansfield Co. at the time and had raised the money to build the Lord T-bar.

12, he was regularly skiing with his parents across the Danube. He grew to so love the sport that the arc of his career track from the banks of the Danube to the heights of Mt. Mansfield was, if not entirely predictable, at least logical.

Given the advantage of Mt. Mansfield's terrain, the highest in Vermont, Stowe was the first village in the Northeast to come alive to the promise of winter tourism. By the time Sepp arrived, the Stowe Ski Club had already mounted four winter carnivals. The Mt. Mansfield Hotel Company had built the Toll Road to the top of the mountain (unplowed in winter, it became a fine ski trail). In the winter of 1932, Roland Palmado, president of the Amateur Ski Club of New York, had hiked the Toll Road, surveyed his surroundings, and immediately advised club members that Stowe had much desirable skiing terrain. In 1935, the Roosevelt administration's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) had cut two long trails—the Bruce and the Houston—from the Toll Road down the mountain's western face.

Townpeople had readied four on-mountain lodges (Barnes Camp, Ranch Camp, the Lodge at Snugglers, Toll House) and the Mt. Mansfield Ski Club had hired its first



Gene Rose Collection

The morning crowd motors in at Sepp's Toll House ski school, 1938.

instructor, Jim Trachier. The New York, New Haven & Hartford had begun to run its "Skimeister" train from New York City to Waterbury, Vermont, where transportation awaited to take skiers 20 miles north to Stowe. During the winter of 1935-36, the Mt. Mansfield Hotel Company's Toll House became a small hotel. Sitting at the approach to the Toll Road and built to sell tickets and supply bathrooms to the carriage trade, it had been enlarged to add six rental rooms. And then the CCC finished the third trail on Mansfield, the two-and-a-half-mile Nose Dive, in February 1936. One of the few expert race trails in New England, "The Nose" would soon become the most famous ski descent in the East.

Back across the Atlantic meanwhile, Sepp Ruschp, now 27, had become an official Austrian state-certified instructor, having taken his exam at St. Christoph under the great Hannes Schneider three years earlier. Previously, Sepp had graduated from the Linz technical high school with a major in mechanical engineering and had applied for work at the Porsche auto company. Asked to join the Nazi party as part of the deal, Sepp refused. Instead, he turned away from engineering and became a ski equipment salesman at a sport shop in Linz. In 1936, he won the Austrian national cross-country championship and ranked as one of central Europe's leading ski athletes. But his ambition, sparked by what he had heard about skiing in the United States, had now vaulted the ocean.

Sepp had come to realize that he had a choice — between getting a ski school in America immediately or staying on in Austria and getting a ski school in 10 years or so. "There were 600 certified ski instructors in Austria," Sepp once said. "In America, skiing was just starting. Sure, I was doing all right with my ski shop and my teaching, but I thought of what I could do [in the U.S.]" Sepp therefore set his sights on a ski school across the Atlantic and began

taking night courses in business administration and private lessons in English.

Even more decisive was his growing alarm over the rule of the Nazi Party in Germany. Many Austrians believed their country would be better off under the proposed *Anschluss*, the threatened German annexation of Austria. Sepp definitely did not. Says Bill Riley, "Sepp had traveled more than your average cross-country skier to races in central Europe. He once told me, 'The *Anschluss* was underway. You have no idea of how bad the situation was becoming in Europe.'"

Sepp had been busily posting some 90 letters during the year to ski clubs in the U.S. to see if any were in the market for a certified Austrian ski instructor to direct a ski school. This was at a point in time when there were no more than a handful of instructors in the U.S. with certifications of any kind. The most solid response came from Frank Griffin, president of the Mt. Mansfield Ski Club. An agreement was made that Sepp would run the "Mt. Mansfield Ski School" for \$100 a month, plus half of any sum over \$100 a month in lesson fees, plus a room and a desk in the Toll House lodge. The terms were not exactly generous, but they constituted a start at least. Taking leave of his fiancé, Hermine, promising to return in the spring, Sepp sailed for the U.S. He arrived at Stowe on December 10, 1936.

Spare Beginnings

The first months were discouraging. There was very little snow on Mt. Mansfield until mid-February 1937. "It was like a lost territory," he says in an interview with Ezra Bowen in the 1963 *Book of American Skiing*. "I looked around and said to myself, 'OK, I'm in America, but where is the skiing?'" And he had missed a big chance. Sepp had not taught for Hannes Schneider, so he wasn't invited to the 1936 New York and Boston Ski Shows to perform with Schneider, Otto Lang, and Benno Rybizka—an exposure that could have done much for Sepp and Stowe. As it was, Sepp's early exposure was limited to a sign stuck in the snow near the Toll House reading "Mt. Mansfield Ski School Practice Slope. For Pupils Only. Herr Sepp Ruschp in Charge." Clearly, name recognition did not ensue. In his 1971 book *Mansfield: The Story of Vermont's Loftiest Mountain*, Robert Hagerman wrote, "...for many, he was known only as 'the Austrian instructor.'"

And Sepp now met head-on a daunting reality of American skiing. Austrian skiers always took at least basic lessons—it was the custom. But Americans were generally not so accustomed. Very few willing pupils, in fact, showed up at the Toll House during the first two months. Typically,

Sepp met the challenge of financial survival with noble resilience. He bought a small Ford and transformed himself into a traveling instructor, advertising lessons in a half-dozen nearby towns.

He burned a lot of gas that winter, but soon spread his name far enough to prove that a minimum of public demand existed—a fact not always apparent at Stowe. And Sepp did not feel it necessary that he share freelance fees with the Mt. Mansfield Ski Club, since his agreement only covered teaching at Mt. Mansfield—at least in Sepp's view. To make matters better, he got a mid-season boost from Stowe lumber baron Craig Burt, a man closely connected to the Mt. Mansfield Hotel Company and to Stowe tourism generally. Burt bought a rope tow for \$900 and installed it on the Toll House slope in mid-February 1937. The tow was powered by—and the media always made much of this—a 1927 Cadillac engine. In its first year, the lift was wildly successful, bringing in \$1,000 at 25 cents a ride, money that did not go to Sepp but to the Mt. Mansfield Hotel Company. Yet Burt gave Sepp's pupils, who had to either pay or climb, permission to ride free. This hugely speeded up Sepp's lessons, giving him time to freelance elsewhere.

Sepp was charging a dollar a lesson during the winter of 1936-37 while giving, typically, some 80 lessons a week—a dozen a day—for a total of 1,100 lessons that season, grossing \$15,000 (in today's money). But the future seemed clouded. A popular French instructor, Jacques Charmoz—a member of the 1936 French team captained by Emile Allais—also began giving lessons on the mountain. However, Sepp took it with characteristic good humor. Peter Ruschp recalls the classic story of Sepp going up to Charmoz one day and saying, "Look, we can make this thing a success. You give me lessons in the morning, and I'll give you lessons in the afternoon—and we'll be busy all the time."

At the end of the season, there was a break between Sepp and Frank Griffin, head of the Mt. Mansfield Ski Club, reportedly involving a disagreement about freelancing. But Sepp was a fighter and nothing if not resourceful. Before the end of the season, he had struck a deal with the Mt. Mansfield Hotel Company to teach for them at the Toll House the next winter. With that, he sailed back to Austria to marry Hermine and hire an assistant instructor named Edi Euler.

On their return, the Ruschps settled into quarters that were given to them upstairs at the Toll House, where they would reside for another 10 years. Now having two teachers, the newly minted "Sepp Ruschp Ski School" could give beginner and advanced lessons simultaneously. The hotel company had hired a young

desk clerk and secretary, Helen Murray, who later became Sepp's secretary (and years later his second wife, after Hermine died).

At the beginning of the second season, 1937-38, there began a "war of the schools." Frank Griffin had reclaimed the "Mt. Mansfield Ski School" title, set up a second rope tow near the runoff of the Nose Dive, and hired an instructor named Willi Benedict. The mountain was fast becoming a circus midway strung with competing sideshows: two rope tows, two ski schools, and four on-mountain lodges. This obviously limited the potential of any one of the businesses on the mountain, a problem that had to be dealt with before Mt. Mansfield could hit its stride.

Search for Growth

By now, Sepp had a dozen students on an average day, ending his need to travel. But given his studies in business administration and belief in his own abilities, he longed for a larger field for his talent. And at the end of the 1937-38 season, a better offer came his way. Fellow Austrian Hannes Schroll had just left as director of the ski school at Yosemite, California, intent on finding financing for his own project, to be called "Sugar Bowl." So Yosemite's head exec, Don Tressider, offered Hannes' job to Sepp.

But the Mt. Mansfield Hotel Company, likely at the urging of Craig Burt, wanted to keep its winter operation going and made Sepp the kind of offer he was looking for. The company agreed to widen the teaching slope at the lower end of the Toll Road, expand the Toll House by adding a small restaurant, and make Sepp essentially the manager of Mt. Mansfield's winter operations with a contract that awarded him 20 per cent of the profits—from the ski school, the rope tow, and the rooms and restaurant at the Toll House. Sepp accepted, happily.

But now it was becoming evident that Mt. Mansfield



Mt. Mansfield's first rope tow, powered by a 1927 Cadillac engine, was installed on the Toll House slope in February 1937. It cost Craig Burt \$900 but took in \$1,000 in its first year.

was lagging badly behind the times. A serious immediate problem was posed by competition from New Hampshire. The East's first chair had been installed on Mt. Belknap in Laconia during the 1937-38 season. In North Conway, the management of Mt. Cranmore had installed its odd Ski-mobile funicular during the current season, and Hannes Schneider himself was scheduled to arrive to head the Cranmore ski school. And at Franconia, Cannon Mountain had installed America's first aerial cable tram. These New Hampshire resorts were clearly outdistancing Mt. Mansfield with its puny rope tows.

This was nothing that Sepp himself could remedy, but his presence did count. It was Roland Palmedo who rode to the rescue. His Amateur Ski Club of New York considered Mt. Mansfield its home mountain, and Palmedo had a major stake in the success of Sepp's ski school so that its Austrian instructors could continue to serve club members.

A wealthy investment banker, Palmedo had no trouble chartering Mt. Mansfield Ski Lift, Inc. and raising the \$90,000 needed to build a chairlift. He hired American Steel & Wire, the firm that had built the first five chairs at Sun Valley. Late in 1940, the job was finished—a 6,330-foot

In 1954, Sepp's first year as president, Mt. Mansfield became the first ski corporation in the East to gross a million dollars. Stowe was now the place to be, and Mt. Mansfield was the place to ski.

chairlift with a 2,000-foot vertical rise, 86 chairs, and a capacity of 200 skiers per hour. To top it off, a unique eight-sided warming hut—the Octagon—was built at the top of the mountain. The chair was the last major lift built in the U.S. before World War II.

The chairlift was a splendid break for Sepp. He had been consulted at every step along the way and so had helped design a lift that would bring in advanced pupils. He never forgot the day the Stowe chair opened on November 17, 1940. "It was my birthday," Sepp told Ezra Bowen. "The lift got stuck. There were 49 newspapermen dangling in the air for over an hour. Blinding snowstorm. We had to pull them down with ropes like *volga-schiffer* [barge-haulers]." In spite of the inauspicious start, the chairlift provided 57,266 rides that winter. There was little doubt about the attraction of 86 chairs making the trip to the top in 15 minutes rather than the muscle-aching, time-consuming climb. The reputation of Mt. Mansfield and Stowe soon rose higher than that of any other Eastern resort.

But on December 7, 1941 came the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Skiing almost stopped dead in its tracks as the U.S. military drafted young males, the prime ski population.

Sepp's ski school staff shrank and business dropped to less than half. Yet Sepp managed to come up with a solution. He had a private pilot's license and used it to line up a job with the Army Air Force. All during the war, he instructed in its Civilian Pilot Training Program at Burlington, 40 miles away. He and Hermine lived in an apartment in Burlington during the week and attended to ski school business in Stowe on weekends. The wartime school was staffed by women—Mary Howard, Joan Stent, Barbara Shaw, and Mary Bourdon—all of them proud graduates of the Sepp Ruschp Ski School.

Sepp also worked as a machine-tool expeditor for Bell Aircraft. Between the Army Air Force and Bell Aircraft, he was doing better than he had ever done at Stowe and was able to put away a good deal of money. And that turned out to be propitious because expenses rose sharply when his first child, Peter, joined the family in September 1943.

C.V. Starr Arrives

In a sort of paradox, the war actually brought salvation to Stowe—in the unlikely form of Cornelius Van Der Starr, known to his friends as "Neil." Starr was very likely the world's richest insurance man, and the firmly self-assured head of American International Group—AIG. Starr had learned to ski at Sun Valley in 1939 but after he moved his firm from the West Coast to New York City, he showed up at Stowe. He and his wife Mary became so enamored of the scene at Mt. Mansfield, particularly the gracious amenities of the Lodge at Smugglers Notch, that they spent much of the 1942-43 winter in Stowe. Starr's private instructor was Sepp Ruschp. The two hit it off, and a strong friendship evolved.

Starr did find, as he told Sepp, that on days when Sepp was not there to intercede, standing in the chairlift line for 30 minutes sorely tried his patience. What was needed, said Starr pointedly, was another lift. Sepp agreed that this was a grand idea but there was no handy investor around to finance another lift, especially during wartime.

Starr decided to put Sepp to a test by pledging to loan Sepp \$38,000 for a new lift—if Sepp would raise the rest. Sepp threw in \$8,000 of his wartime savings, then showed that raising funds was the sort of thing he did very well. Peter Ruschp says of Sepp that, "He was like a catalyst, with a lot of energy and enthusiasm. He could make things happen. He was adept at persuading." Sepp raised the remaining \$34,000 from stockholders in the Mt. Mansfield Hotel Company. Sepp had now bootstrapped himself up to the status of major stockholder in the company owning the new, 3,000-foot, high-capacity Constam T-bar that opened on Mt. Mansfield in 1946, the first major lift built in the U.S. after World War II.

Now Sepp's family was growing. The Ruschps had a daughter, Christie, and by this time 5-year old Peter was skiing in his father's tracks around the mountain while Sepp checked the lifts. As the dedicated instructor that he was,

Sepp tracked every class, and as the trained engineer that he was, he knew the proper functioning of every bolt on the T-bar, and he inspected all of it. Says Peter, "His invariable routine was to visit each department each day and ask how things were going." But holding the situation back as the 1950s approached was the unseemly competition that persisted all around him. Mt. Mansfield was, as one journalist put it, "suffering from a mild case of anarchy" involving competing businesses that included four on-mountain lodges, three ski schools, and two major lifts. Finally, this anarchy began to irk Cornelius Starr. He liked a direct line of authority in business. So, having ascertained he had an inspired business partner in Sepp Ruschp, Starr mounted a swift frontal attack, first forming the Mt. Mansfield Company. Having installed himself as president and Sepp as vice-president and general manager, Starr began buying.

Starr effectively bought out everyone else on the mountain by 1951—the Mt. Mansfield Hotel Company, the T-bar company, the Sepp Ruschp Ski School, the Lodge at Smugglers, the chairlift company, and Craig Burt's acres of timberland.



C.V. Starr (left) and Sepp Ruschp, 1960. Said Starr of Sepp, "Sometimes I find a man who has an inner fire—a man who is perfectly in his métier, his orbit. And when I do, I back him." It was a powerful twosome.

The American International

Almost simultaneously, Starr and Sepp came up with another idea—this to put the universe on notice that Stowe was "world class." Their brainstorm was called the "American International." The 1952 Olympics was taking place in Oslo, the U.S. National Alpine Championships were scheduled for Mt. Mansfield that spring, and wouldn't it be splendid if they could bring the Olympics' international stars to Stowe to add a major dose of glamour? So Starr bankrolled the travel of the world's top racers—from Austria, Italy, Norway, France, Japan, Canada, and Switzerland—and brought them to compete in races at Stowe. The first year, some 15,000 race fans turned up to see Canada's Ernie McCulloch negotiate the notorious seven turns on upper Nose Dive to win the downhill. Wrote Peter Oliver in *Stowe: Classic New England*: "If a spot in the international limelight was what Starr and Ruschp were looking for in 1952, they certainly got it....The American International, through the 1950s, became an effective marketing device for spreading the Stowe gospel abroad."

In 1953, Starr appointed himself chairman and Sepp president of the Mt. Mansfield Company. He collaborated with Sepp on every move from then on. Ezra Bowen quotes Starr as saying, "Sometimes I find a man who has an inner fire—a man who is perfectly in his métier, his orbit. And when I do, I back him." Starr had become the gateway to Sepp's dream—and Sepp quickly justified Starr's faith in him. In 1954, Sepp's first year as president, Mt. Mansfield became the first ski corporation in the East to gross a million dollars. Eventually, as part of their happy collaboration, Sepp became a partner in Starr's investments

in the fabled St. Anton in Sepp's Austrian homeland.

Stowe had become the place to be, and Mt. Mansfield the place to ski in the East. The Octagon, the chair, the steep trails known as the Front Four—all remained the touchstones of expert skiing in the Northeast. And Stowe's single chair, that long-lived phenomenon, generated its own legends. Since it often ran in below-zero temperatures, management supplied blankets against the real threat of hypothermia. This being Stowe, a good many riders brought their furs instead, lending a certain high note to the legends of the "Stowe Single."

Then came still another Starr-Ruschp initiative. During the 1950s the Mt. Mansfield Company financed the expansion to Spruce Peak, a separate south-facing intermediate mountain across the Mountain Road from Mt. Mansfield. This gave the ski corporation some of the best intermediate ski terrain in the country—and the very place where a huge ski village expansion is underway today.

In the 1960s, two big rival resorts, Mt. Snow and Killington geared up for mass skiing and began to sell more tickets than Stowe. Yet Mt. Mansfield retained the enviable cachet as the mountain of distinction in the East for the accomplished skier. Stowe village added lodges, restaurants, and nightspots to elevate even higher its reputation for the best après-ski in the East. For nearly a generation, Sepp ran Mt. Mansfield as a clockmaker runs his clocks—smoothly, quietly, reliably. His was the invisible hand that made it all succeed.

In 1960, Sepp was elected president of the National Ski Association, in part because of the skill with which he had developed Stowe but, more importantly, because of his tireless efforts on behalf of competitive skiing. As David

Rowan noted in a contemporary editorial in *Ski Area Management*, "At a critical time in organized skiing, Sepp brought his diplomatic, managerial, and organizational skills to bear...He was a leader in *all* sectors of the sport—business, recreational, and competitive."

But for Sepp, skiing was always about community. "Although he was European," says Bill Riley, "and that held a certain mystique for Vermonters, he made a constant effort to include them in his dream. That was what endeared him to many who had come here." Though C.V. Starr died in 1968, the Ruschp dynasty rolled on during

the 1970s. Peter Ruschp became director of the ski school in 1968 (and is director of skiing today). Sepp became chairman of the board in 1978. He retired in 1984 and died in 1990, leaving Mt. Mansfield as his monument. The American International Group thereafter bought out the Ruschp family interest. Although the unique early history of Stowe and Mt. Mansfield was then over, the almost mythic rise of Sepp Ruschp from "the Austrian instructor" to chairman of the board of the East's most prestigious resort remains one of the most important sagas in the history of American skiing. ✱

SNAPSHOTS IN TIME

50 Years Ago

(From the January and March 1955 issues of *Ski*)

ANKLE-CELL SUPPORTS are the ingenious invention of a St. Anton bootmaker. After lacing the boots, you simply inflate them with a small bicycle pump till they are tight....The FIS has banned Christian Pravda, Stein Eriksen and Zeno Colo from both amateur and open competition on the ground of professionalism....The nation's best alpine skiers are attending the second annual national training camp at Sun Valley. [Among them are] Seniors Brooks Dodge, Ralph Miller, Tom Corcoran, Bud Werner, Max Marolt, Dick Bueck, Katy Rodolph, Skeeter Werner and Juniors Marvin Moriarty, Dave Gorsuch, Betsy Snite and Jill Kinnmont....Squaw Valley, Calif., late bidder for the honor, has been selected to present the U.S. bid for the 1960 Winter Olympic Games.

65 Years Ago

(From the September 1940 issue of *Ski Illustrated*)

PROSPECTS for the 1940 season loom as the brightest in history, according to Roger Langley, president of the National Ski Association. Langley claims there are now more than one million active skiers in the United States.... A lease from the state of Vermont for the right-of-way on Mt. Mansfield for a \$76,000 ski lift has been announced. The lift will be the largest of its kind in the East, similar to those in use at Sun Valley and Mt. Tremblant....Hannes Schneider of St. Anton and now North Conway, N.H., will headline a cast of experts who will demonstrate the Arlberg technique at the National Wintersports Exposition in the Boston Garden. His assistants will include Benno Rybizka, Franz Koessler, and Toni Matt, who won



Ricker boot rep Erich Riess (*Remembering*, pg. 43) toured the U.S. in the Fifties in his Bavarian van, modeled after a Black Forest farmhouse.

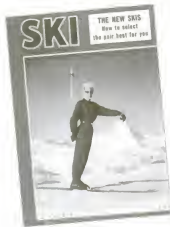
every major downhill last season.... According to Charles Minot Dole, chairman of the National Ski Patrol, accidents are going to continue to occur as long as John Q. Public insists on going skiing without 1) spending plenty of time learning control under the schooling of recognized instructors and 2) being willing to sacrifice enough time during the Fall to put himself in the physical shape necessary to take it.

30 Years Ago

(From the January 1975 issue of *Skiing*)

LAKE PLACID, N.Y., won its bid to stage the XIII Olympic Winter Games in 1980 without having to get into the ring, in a manner of speaking, when Vancouver withdrew from contention less than a month before the IOC was scheduled to vote on the issue. Chamonix, another bidder, withdrew early in 1974 when French

government support for the bid failed to materialize.... The French newspaper *Le Monde* criticizes parallel slalom, now under consideration by the FIS: "We're now waiting for the FIS to add flaming rings and pools of water to add interest to races that are apparently no longer a draw!"... Herman Smith-Johansen, who has always maintained that "if you ski cross-country two miles a day, you will live to be 100" is the best example of his own advice. He'll be 100 next June.



Maria Bogner introduces her revolutionary stretch pant on the November 1955 cover of *SKI*.

Almost Hits, Mostly Misses

Sometimes an eagerly promoted product turns out to be a joke—and sometimes it's just flat out dangerous to life, limb, or commerce.

By Seth Masia

Product hype is as old as the sport. From the beginning, the marketers who sell ski equipment have implied that if you buy this gizmo or that gadget you can ski with the grace and strength of Sondre, or Stein or Toni or Bode. The promise has usually been illusory.

There have always been overhyped products. In the immediate postwar years, Former *Skiing* Editor Doug Pfeiffer recalls nonsensical designs like the Shurl "Speed Groove," a channel carved into the bottom of the ski. Narrow at the ski's shovel, it flared toward the tail, ostensibly to reduce "suction" under the base—suction which doesn't appear to slow down today's grooveless skis. And the Fifties brought forth dozens of badly conceived ski bindings, many of them made cheaply in Japan. But in an era of fractional black-and-white ads and small-circulation ski magazines, few marginal products were backed by huge advertising campaigns.

It took modern media—magazine advertising, ski films, World Cup endorsements—to turn marketing hype into mass entertainment. A truly bad product backed by a massive advertising budget makes for great comedy.

Head's Cracked-Top Killy

The first big ad blitz was launched by Howard Head. By 1968, Head had

been building aluminum skis for 20 years, and he was at the top of his game, running one of the largest ski factories in the world. His ski-building process hadn't changed much since—the skis were still laminated as flat boards, then bent to shape. "It was archaic," says John Howe, who had recently arrived in the

design engineering department.

The future clearly belonged to fiberglass. Jean-Claude Killy had won three Olympic gold medals that year at Grenoble on the Dynamic VR17 wrapped-glass torsion box ski. Head hired Killy, and Killy's ski technician Michel Arpin. Early in 1969, Howe and Arpin set out to duplicate the ski performance of the VR17 GS ski, using a laminating process. Prototypes were built from layers of aluminum and fiberglass, and they worked quite well. Laboratory skis had Head's standard black phenolic topskin.

The marketing department wanted a flashy red topskin for the production ski, and the factory found an appropriate red plastic from Westinghouse. In the

Fritzmeier introduces 2-skis-in-1.



The Fritzmeier Duo. When the bumps reach as high as your groin—it's a quick-turning compact ski.

But when you're ready for some flat-out flying—it gives you the smooth-caring stability of a longer ski.

It's all a matter of weight.

The Duo's pocket-sized weights attach front and rear under the removable aerodynamic housings. (A quarter does nicely as your "tool kit.") And the heavier the weight you select the longer the Duo thinks it is.

Fritzmeier offers 3 different sets of weights to change the vibration frequency of the ski and allow you to keep more edge on the snow. The

weights produce smoother, quieter, more directionally stable skis that have the feel of a 180, a 195 or a 225.

Like all Fritzmeier skis, the Duo uses a "fiber-penetrative" construction. While in the mold, long fibers that extend from the top and bottom layers are electrostatically projected into the Duo's foam core to

lock the ski together and produce an exceptionally strong ski.

In addition, the Duo also features an exaggerated up flare that enables quick initiation of turns.

This year, while America is discovering Fritzmeier, discover Duo for yourself. Put on a little weight... and watch your skiing take off.

FRITZMEIER

For Free Catalog write: Ranche Norbert USA, 200 Cove Mill Road, Westfield, N.Y. 12087

"Put on a little weight," claimed Fritzmeier's ad, "and watch your skiing take off." But skiers wanted to look like a racer, not like a bumper

summer of 1969 the Head factory, located in humid Timonium, Maryland, manufactured 30,000 pairs of the Killy 800 and shipped them, under wraps, to dealers across the country. In emulation of the era's auto industry, which unveiled its new tail-fin shapes in September each year, dealers were told to hide the skis until the official introduction date in early fall. So boxes of skis went into cellars and warehouses. In dry states like Colorado and Utah, shop managers began to hear ominous cracking sounds emanating from the boxes.

As the skis dried in low-humidity climates, the red topskins shrank and cracked. By October, almost every ski made had a broken top.

Over and above the cracking top-



"Why I recommend the Caber Bio."

the caber bio
Instant Better!

the caber bio is a revolutionary new boot technology that provides a custom fit for every skier. It is made of a lightweight, flexible material that conforms to the shape of your foot and ankle, providing a snug, secure fit. The caber bio is available in a variety of sizes and colors, and is perfect for both recreational and competitive skiers. For more information, visit us online at www.caberbio.com or call 1-800-850-8500.

Orthopedist Eisenberg and downhiller Dong Powell teamed to tell skiers that the Bio was the key to quicker edging. Buyer reaction was also quick, as skiers lined up to return the boots.

skin, the few recreational skiers who got it onto snow had trouble with the ski. It was patterned so closely on Killy's own race-stock ski that people with mortal skills could barely bend it. "It was too much ski," says veteran retailer Dave Gorsuch.

While all this was going on, Head had negotiated sale of the company to AMF, the bowling equipment manufacturer. The following year the Timonium workforce voted to unionize, and AMF closed the place in favor of a spanking new factory in Boulder, Colorado—set up to manufacture fiberglass torsion-box skis and tennis rackets.

Boots: Custom Fit Turns Messy Fit

The only reason many don't recall the Killy 800 topskin disaster today is that it was eclipsed by a contemporary product explosion of still greater magnitude: the million-dollar Lange-flo boot meltdown of 1970 that eventually cost Bob Lange control of his company (see "Bob Lange and the Plastic Boot," Third Issue 2001). In the wake of that warranty disaster, boot companies scrambled to create elaborate custom-fit systems for the new generation of stiff plastic boots.

Peter Kennedy had provided a simple but messy solution as early as

1968. Kennedy's lightweight hinged-plastic boot shell was far ahead of its time, and he had an efficient way to produce custom fit: He simply mixed up a foaming plastic liquid and poured it into the boot shell. Then the skier, wearing a neoprene wet-suit sock, stepped into the mush-filled shell and buckled up. The liquid, at room temperature and atmospheric pressure, cured quickly to mold the liner permanently but comfortably to the foot. Excess foam boiled over the top of the boot onto the floor and the cured overflow had to be peeled off the outside of the boot with a knife.

Kennedy couldn't compete with Bob Lange's ability to raise and spend cash, so his company quietly faded from the scene while Lange went out with a highly public bang. Besides, retailers didn't want to spend hours a day cleaning up foam overflow.

As a result of all this, bootmakers turned their attention to "injection" systems, which pumped material into a closed bladder—in theory keeping all the mess inside the boot. And they spent money—scads of it—to promote their inventions. The cleanest system came from Head's boot division: You simply forced air into the boot with the equivalent of a basketball pump. But it turned out that compressed air was pretty hard

stuff, and it wanted to puff the bladder out into a spherical form. And since pressure inside the boot changed with altitude, the boots grew tighter as you rode the lift and looser as you descended. The swelling air bladders cut off circulation to the toes.

While all this was going on, Nordica was battling to defend its 30 percent market share. Its designers had created the promising Astral series of plastic boots, and the importer, Beconta, wanted to back the product with a killer polyurethane foam injection system. In 1970 Beconta product manager Sandy Linan contracted with a company called Denver Brick & Pipe to fabricate hundreds of foaming stands. The 300 lb. rig was made of steel, painted bright blue, and consisted of a platform, handrail, a couple of powerful electric pumps, a series of flexible pipes and timer-governed valves, and three barrels of highly carcinogenic chemicals. Nordica dealers across the country spent \$1,200 each to install the stands in retail space, and invited customers to step aboard.

Things went wrong right from the start. The first time the machine was demonstrated to retailers, the technician assembled the valves on the wrong end of the metering pumps, then neglected to open the valves before switching on the pumps. Boot-fit expert Sven Coomer recalls, "The back pressure blew off the hoses and they leaped into the air, spraying chemicals onto everything within 20 feet. Everyone went running into the bowels of the warehouse."

Sandy Linan, sensing looming disaster, left Beconta and began developing a much simpler hand-held foaming gun. Coomer took over as Nordica product manager. Hundreds of machines were installed in Nordica shops across the country.

Because of Beconta's massive advertising campaign, customers arrived with preconceived notions of what injection foaming was all about. Some had an idea that a big needle had to pierce the innerboot, and worried that

an overeager shop employee would shove the needle into tender flesh. The truth was only slightly less dramatic. Once the mixture went into the liner, it was stuck there. As it expanded, pressure and heat built up. If too much foam had gone into the boot, pressure on the feet could grow intolerable. Some customers passed out. As in the original warehouse demonstration, the mixing tubes often popped loose, leaving stalactites of golden brown goo dripping from merchandise racks. A lot of expensive skiwear was ruined.

Over the next couple of winters, a few boot-foaming experts emerged, people with the patience and intuition to guesstimate how much foam to use for a specific foot shape in a specific shell size. And they moved to manageable hand-held systems, which worked like a caulking gun. Within two years, the last of the expensive Beconta Blue Berthas had gone on the scrap heap. By 1974, bootmakers figured out how to make plastic shells that accurately followed the contours of an average foot, so simple oil-and-cork flow pockets provided a comfortable fit for most people. The foam boom faded, except among the racing community.

Fritzmeier's Do-It-All Duo

Founded in the mid-Twenties as a saddlery firm, the German company Fritzmeier evolved into a manufacturer of tractor seats, then truck cabs. After adopting plastic-molding technology, the company turned its attention to the glamorous world of skiing. In 1975 it introduced a line of injection-molded plastic skis. After the 1976 Innsbruck Olympics, they signed up double gold medalist Rosi Mittermaier, who had won the downhill and slalom while skiing on Dynamic.

This could have been a recipe for success. Instead, for the 1977 model year, Fritzmeier put its considerable marketing budget behind a short 170cm recreational ski called the Duo. With a hefty price tag of \$250—more than most top racing skis of the era—the Duo was billed as a “do it all” ski.

The lightweight Duo worked as a pretty fair mogul ski, equivalent to the short freestyle skis then in vogue. But if you wanted to cruise fast, you could bolt on a set of steel weights at the tip and tail. Three sets were provided, to make the ski handle like a 185, 195 or 205cm ski. With the 205cm plates in place, the Duo felt as massive as any Austrian GS race ski.

All that weight made the ski feel stable, without improving the edging power of what remained a fairly soft 170cm ski. Fast skiers understood this instinctively. Besides, a skier who wanted to go at mach speeds wanted to look like a racer, not like a loser. Instead of carrying a macho-looking pair of 205 GS skis on your shoulder, you'd pack

Billed as a do-everything ski, the Fritzmeier and its attachable weights did more to stretch skiers' pockets than it did to stretch a skier's technique.

your pockets with a couple of pounds of steel plates? It didn't make sense. The Duo slid into obscurity.

Rock 'n' Roll Caber Bio

By 1980, most major ski equipment factories were owned by “conglomerates”—corporations that had grown huge by buying up companies in diverse fields. The parent companies often knew little or nothing about winter sports.

A typical case was Questor Corp. in Toledo, Ohio. Questor grew out of the Pyramid Rubber Co., founded in 1920 to make baby bottles. Its most successful brand was Evenflo. As the company grew, it acquired dozens of brands, mostly related to child care. In 1958, the company began buying stock in the parent company of Tinkertoy—the sporting goods manufacturer AG Spalding. By 1969, Evenflo held a controlling interest in

Spalding, which meant it had also acquired, quite coincidentally, two operations in Italy: the Perseico ski factory, and the Caber boot plant.

With the explosion of World Cup racing beginning that year, Caber and Perseico boomed. Spalding-Perseico made powerful Squadra Corse skis for Gustavo Thoeni and his contemporaries. Ingemar Stenmark, Cindy Nelson, and other champions famously skied in bright blue Caber Comp boots. Both factories made straightforward, no-frills, no-nonsense high performance gear.

Until Dr. Joel Eisenberg came along. Eisenberg, a New York orthopedist, patented a new boot design. Noting that expert skiers edged with movements of the knee and hip, and then made fine adjustments with the foot and ankle, he reasoned that freeing the foot to roll might improve control. Specifically, he wanted to make room for flexibility of the sub-talar joint just below the ankle-bone. So he built a footbed that could rock from side to side inside the shell.

Anyone with any sense could see this was a bad idea. A skier who wanted to apply pressure to the inside edge of the ski was now able to rock the foot in that direction, but no pressure was actually transmitted to the boot shell, and thus to the ski, until the footbed had used up its full rocking range. The boot, in short, was unsinkable except with gross movements of the knee.

This didn't seem to bother the folks at Questor. In 1979 the company spent upward of a half million dollars on a full schedule of ads in *Ski*, *Skiing* and *Powder* magazines featuring Dr. Eisenberg's genial visage and authoritative endorsement. Thousands of pairs were sold and shipped to ski shops. Skiers saw the ads and bought the boots. By Christmas, skiers in new Bio System boots were veering uncontrollably across America's ski slopes.

Reaction was swift. Skiers lined up to return their boots. Furious retailers demanded that Spalding-Caber make amends. In Armonk, New York, Jimmy

Ross of Hickory & Tweed chased his Spalding rep from the store, hurling Caber boots down the stairs after him. Caber tried to salvage the idea by stiffening up the roll rate of the footbed, in effect disabling the Bio System. And when Questor refused to pay Eisenberg's \$288,000 endorsement fee, the doctor sued and won the entire amount. In 1992, the Caber factory was sold to Rossignol and the brand name disappeared.

The Toeless, Tongueless Nava

Nava was a trendy It with a very successful line of motorcycle helmets. In 1986, when management decided to even out the company's cash flow by producing a line of winter merchandise, the staff was handed a clean sheet of paper. The result was a boot-binding system unlike anything ever seen before.

The Nava System, introduced in 1988, consisted of a soft, warm, waterproof knee-high mukluk with a very aggressive snow-walking tread. It was a fabulous boot for running a snowblower, or for snowshoeing. Hidden in the sole was a stainless steel lug that interfaced with a clever alpine ski binding—in effect, the fiberglass-reinforced boot sole formed the plate for a classic '70s-era plate binding.

To provide edging power, a spring-loaded lever arm was hinged to the back of the binding. With the boot out, the lever functioned as a ski brake. With the boot in, the arm cradled the skier's calf, gently following the leg as it flexed for normal skiing.

The system provided little support going backward, and—with no stiff tongue and cuff to lean against—none

at all going forward. If you wanted to push the shovel of your ski down the backside of a bump, or load the forward edge to tighten a turn—well, you couldn't.

U.S. importer Frank Vener, who had been associated with such popular brands as Volk, Tecnica, and Dolomite, spent two winters trying to sell the system to an incredulous market. A video of 1976 downhill bronze medalist Herbert Plank storming through deep powder couldn't erase the queasy insecurity most skiers felt on venturing out on Navas.

Nava soldiered on in the motorcycle

Ernesto Saska in California, who also sold Kneissl skis and Henke boots.

In 1980, Geze set up its own U.S. distribution company by hiring expensive executives with experience in the Salomon organization. They also revised the product line, creating a pincer-style toe with massively durable aluminum castings and expensive roller bearings at all mechanical friction points. Geze's management was convinced they could sell an expensive binding on the strength of German engineering. They ran pricey promotions, offering, for instance, a year's lease on a new Porsche to shop employees who sold the most

Geze bindings.

To underscore the company's engineering sophistication, for 1981 they created the SE3: the world's most expensive (and heaviest) ski binding. In addition to the normal release paths, the SE3 toe unit was hinged at the front to release upward. A separate spring system was included so that lateral

release and upward release could be adjusted separately.

The SE3 was now equipped to do everything that a 1951 Cubco would do. And at \$250, the SE3 was only about three times the price of the Besser Alu binding, which also released upward at the toe.

American skiers weren't buying it. After the U.S. subsidiary collapsed, the binding brand was sold off to LK Holdings, an American importer of bicycle parts which had recently purchased Look. Production was moved the Look factory in Nevers, France. In 1994, that factory was purchased by Rossignol, and the Geze brand name disappeared. ❄

[illegible]

"At \$225," boasts this Geze ad, "the SE 3 is the most expensive binding in the world." No one doubted that—or the fact that it was the heaviest binding in the world.

business and today sells ski helmets and goggles in Europe.

Just Like a Cubco

Geze was founded in Stuttgart in 1863 to manufacture building hardware, chiefly door and window fixtures. In 1898 the brothers Oskar and Hugo Hinderer, early ski enthusiasts, added bindings to the factory's product line.

After World War II the company adopted the manufacturing philosophy of its neighbors, Daimler-Benz and Porsche: It made only top-drawer products, precisely engineered and beautifully machined from steel and aluminum billet, usually burnished to a satin finish. The U.S. importer was

A Walk Through Olympic History

Encompassing more than the history of skiing in the Winter Games, Lausanne's Olympic Museum unites sport, art, and culture within a remarkable edifice in a magnificent setting.

By Doug Pfeiffer

The Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland shares its ample verdant acreage with the venerable International Olympic Headquarters, giving the city and its 250,000 mostly French-speaking inhabitants the self-assumed right to style itself as "The Olympic Capital of the World." The Museum is its Grand Temple, its Taj Mahal, a *très soignée* destination worthy of any sports lover's pilgrimage.

The museum opened in June, 1993, on the north shore of Lake Geneva, an hour's train or car ride from Geneva. Relatively little exhibit space is devoted to skiing, perhaps in fair proportion to the much larger content of the Summer Games. What makes it a worthwhile visit for readers of *SKIING HERITAGE* or any sports-minded person is summarized by the words of the former president of the International Olympic Committee (1980-2001), Juan Antonio Samaranch, who calls the museum "a meeting point where the history of the Games, avant-garde artistic events, and research can all be united under one roof."

The museum lives up to its billing—right from the moment you walk up a winding path from the imposing cascades of water at the entrance, up past larger-than-life bronze statues, past marble sculptures, past a garden plaza encompassing an eternal Olympic Flame, up by a grand 10-foot-tall kevlar and resin sculpture of three muscular male torsos. (As you watch, the torsos divide, separate, then rotate until united once again.) These, as well as a dozen more impressive



The museum grounds in winter—"a meeting point where the history of the Games, avant-garde artistic events, and research [are] all united under one roof."

works created by noted European artisans, are scattered strategically around the park-like grounds. Aside from their unique and often avant-garde facets, they provide a delightful foreground to a panorama glimpsed between 100-year-old trees and green-leaved shrubbery and encompassing a background of distant white-capped Alps beyond the blue waters of Lake Geneva.

You approach the white-marble-clad museum via a short walk between more sculptures to a broad corridor of eight white, contemporized Grecian columns, their tops encircled with three bands and the five Olympic rings. The building, described as "classical modernism" with simple lines and a flat roof, appears low to the landscape, but upon entering through ceiling-high glass doors to the reception area, the interior space suddenly looms large. The central interior is a void descending one floor down and two more up to a domed skylight. A two-story slen-

der work of art, a sort of reinterpreted totem pole, rises from below.

I was immediately attracted to the circular void and peered down to the floor below, to the Olympic Studies Centre, the repository of some 20,000 documents and books—from the manuscripts of Baron Pierre de Coubertin to the organization of the Olympic Games—with suitable locations for reading. Additionally, the Studies Centre offers 250,000 photos and some 10,000 hours of video featuring highlights of past Olympic Games, all available for viewing on site.

Scattered around a central atrium, the main floor houses a book and gift store, an auditorium, and several exhibit halls. From there, a broad ramp spirals upward to additional exhibits and displays, including many renditions in paint and bronze of artistic creations inspired by athletic events. The Museum lives up to its mission of uniting sport, art and culture spanning the centuries to modern times. Exotic

pottery, for instance, dates from the earliest Olympics and is embellished with scenes of the original Games in Olympia. Fascinating, among the more contemporary collections, are the torches, crafted from silver in highly imaginative designs, that have been relayed around the world to carry the Olympic Flame to the sites of the world's venues. On display too, are Olympic medals, posters, innumerable images, publications, stamps, and coins. Television screens and interactive computers add to the displays, and a recorded commentary for guiding visitors is available with translations in at least eight languages.

Many of the displays are permanent. One concerns the use of modern materials such as fiberglass, carbon fiber, epoxy and allied resins, and titanium in the building of today's high-tech sports equipment. Road bikes, kayaks, tennis racquets and skis are all on display. Others are changed periodically, such as a recent exhibit highlighting the role of balance in athletics, all enhanced with the aid of computers, robotics, and audio-visual equipment.

For the skiing enthusiast, there's a photo of the Le Trappeur boots to which Jean-Claude Killy had slathered

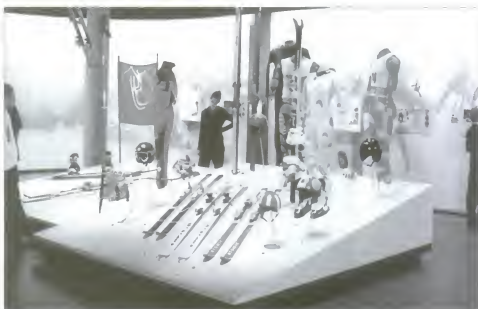
gobs of epoxy to their sides for better edge control and to set up his Olympic medal-winning career. The skis, helmet, and suit that Killy used to win Olympic Gold at Grenoble in 1968 are also here, as are skis and other paraphernalia used by Ingemar

Stenmark (Lake Placid, 1980), Ole Christian Furuseth (Albertville, 1992), Markus Wasmeier (Lillehammer, 1994), and Jonny Moseley (Nagano, 1998), as well as the medals of many other alpine and nordic Olympic champions.

Even so, this is not truly a ski museum. Although its interactive electronics keep things lively, if the museum does fall short it's in its presentation of skiing art and sculpture, such as is on display in the Beekley Collection at the Mammoth Ski Museum in Mammoth Lakes, California, or in the fine collection of large silver and bronze race trophies won by Kandahar Club champions in the small museum in Mürren, Switzerland. That shortcoming aside, if you want to know more about Jean-Claude Killy, about his Olympic record, about all the Winter Olympic Games and their participants, the Olympic Studies Center has it all, either in print, in photos, or on video.

If you start to suffer from information overload, you can ascend to the top of the spiral ramp to a top-notch linen-napkin restaurant with a selection of fine regional wines and a terrace with captivating views of the Olympic Park and sculpture gardens, Lake Geneva, and beyond to the Alps (Dents du Midi to Mont Blanc). Inside, the whole place vibrates with modern brass and glass. Outside, we found an indelible serenity. It is Switzerland, after all.

The Museum is open daily (except Easter Sunday, December 25, and January 1) from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. From October through April, it is closed on Mondays. For more information, visit the website www.olympic.org. ❄



(Above) Although ski exhibits comprise only a small portion of the museum's offerings, they display some of the most coveted artifacts used by Olympic champions. (Below) The interactive and audio-visual displays, such as the museum's wide-screen theater, are impressive.



SKI Bibliography By Henry Yaple

Henry Yaple, college librarian at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, writes in his introduction: "As a hopelessly addicted skier of more than 40 years, and an academic librarian of nearly 30 years practice, the literature of skiing has always been kind of a surrogate drug during the summer and fall months when I could not ski." The result of Henry Yaple's desire to immerse himself in skiing during the off-season, even if only in print, has borne fruit after 10 years of labor in the form of 7,615 entries in this two-volume, 743-page work.

Ski Bibliography is a most exhaustive listing of thousands of recorded public expressions of the sport—not only books and periodicals, but leaflets, reports, postgraduate dissertations, government documents and—most surprisingly—the non-print categories of film, video, sound recordings, computer software, and e-books. This is a magnificent work intended for the pleasure and profit of historians present and future, for collectors of skiing literature, and for skiers just plain curious about the extent, breadth, and scope of English-language writing and recordings about the sport between 1890 and 2002.

The organization of such a work is one of the most difficult decisions the author has to make. Yaple has done well—the 7,615 entries are divided into four major headings: Alpine subjects, Nordic subjects, Combination subjects, and Serial subjects. The first two are self-explanatory. The Combination category is mostly about the ski

business, while the Serial category deals with magazines, newspapers, quarterlies, and other periodicals, right down to *The Dundee Ski Club Journal* and *Deaf Skiers' Digest*.

These four main subject headings are further divided into 141 subheadings. Alpine subjects, for instance, are grouped under subheads such as Ability Testing, Autobiography, and so on throughout the alphabet. Should the reader decide to research Alpine Grass and Dry Slopes, for instance, all he or she has to do is turn to entries listed under that subhead. Provided the research items can be located in a library, the reader could then presumably write a history of Alpine Grass and Dry Slopes for SKIING HERITAGE. Even so, finding a particular title—let's say Paul Ryan's film *Kali*—might be difficult if one had to guess the subject subheading under which it is listed. However, to the rescue then come the book's two cross-reference lists—the Author's Index and the Title Index. It is easy to find information about Ryan's film by looking up either his name, or the name of the film. Either one yields the year, 1970, and the producer, Summit Films.

In sum, the indexes of *Ski Bibliography* add up to a mighty weapon for research projects large and small—as useful in writing a world history of skiing as in constructing a ski-literature crossword puzzle.

It would of course be easier if this were all on a DVD data base in which a single query yields all relevant entries, but author Yaple says this is a project for the future. In the meantime, historians, collectors, and inquisitive skiers can only be grateful for the diligence and perseverance of Henry Yaple, a bibliographer for the ages.

Each copy sold will yield a small

profit for the author, but Yaple won't get rich. As he writes, "I don't expect to make money, but I would like to recoup my out-of-pocket expenses. Of course, my time can't be calculated. I did it for, what else, the love of skiing."—Morten Lund

Ski Bibliography by Henry Yaple. Published by the International Skiing History Association in two volumes. Spiral-bound \$85; hardcover \$95, add \$5 shipping and handling. Payment by check to Henry Yaple, 1889 Fern St., Walla Walla, WA 99362, (509) 525-8303.

Ski Style

By Annie Gilbert Coleman

To quote from her publisher, Coleman seeks "to establish how the meaning of skiing changed over the 20th century, how sport and leisure in America came to be about status and style as much as about physical activity," and "how the recreation industry sold the experience of skiing and created mythic mountain landscapes—and a ski culture that exalts celebrity and status over the physical act of skiing."

As Coleman sees it, "This series of tensions and contradictions surrounding the natural conditions of the sport's landscape, local community identity, and a wealthy, white, and gendered ski culture arose as the meaning of skiing in Colorado changed throughout the 20th century."

It must be the generational divide, but this reviewer does not feel trapped in an alien culture on the slopes, feeling rather that the essential skiing experience has not changed all that

Continued next page



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much in the last half-century. But Coleman takes as a comparison point the sport in the 1920s, 75 years ago. She describes her baseline as the time when "the practice of skiing revolved around a relatively undeveloped landscape," and "early skiers had no difficulty finding mountains they could hike up and descend on their own."

Yet that has not changed. Those undeveloped slopes are still there in great number if anyone wants to seek them out. In fact, there are more backcountry skiers now than there were alpine skiers during the 1920s. Those undeveloped slopes haven't disappeared—it is just that most skiers choose not to go there. Most skiers abandoned undeveloped mountains as more comfortable skiing appeared.

Skiing a wild mountain without a ski patrol, insulated parka, release bindings, ski lifts, and in snow pocked with unseen rocks that could shatter wood skis certainly wasn't commodified, or stylish, but it was also not very popular.

If this is a history of Colorado's cultural development in skiing, then the history that veteran skiers most feel strongly about lies elsewhere—in the enormous advances in the sport, the huge improvements in lifts, ski equipment, ski clothing, trail grooming, and decent amenities. All of this gets short shrift here in favor of enumerating status symbols—even though there have been status symbols in skiing ever since the invention of the stretch pant some 50 years ago, even though there has been a celebrity culture in skiing since Sun Valley opened some 70 years ago.

In short, to skiers of my generation, the fact that status on or off the slope is there—or is not there—seems as beside the point now as it was 50 years ago. There's the snow, and the skis, and the sensation is the same.

Happily, Coleman is a superb researcher and on much more compatible terms with veterans like myself on other matters, crafting superb chapters

in uncharted historical territory. In "A Shack and a Rope Tow" she explores in interesting detail the role played by auto roads, railroads, and buses in the growth of skiing in Colorado, including a revealing map that locates nearly every modern Colorado resort on a main or branch rail line. Among other notable chapters are two on the U.S. Forest Service as the spur to the growth of Colorado's destination resorts.

There is so much to recommend this book and its voluminous research that it is perhaps a quibble to wish Coleman had put in a few seasons suffering on undeveloped mountainsides to help her realize that commercialization is integral to the growth of the sport rather than to its spiritual demise.—M.L.

Ski Style: Sport and Culture in the Rockies by Annie Gilbert Coleman; hardcover, 298 pages, b&w illustrations, \$29.95, University of Kansas Press, 2501 West 15th St., Lawrence, KS 66049-3905, (785) 864-4154.

The Boys of Winter

By Charles Sanders

Charles Sanders, a man of many parts, newly the director of the music industry's anti-hunger program, Artists Against Hunger and Poverty, has written a history of the 10th Mountain Division that other authors of 10th Mountain books—and surely there will be more—now have something to measure their work against.

Co-editor John Imbrie of *Good Times, Bad Times*, the collected memoirs of C. Company of the 10th's 85th regiment, says *Boys of Winter* is "the best book on the 10th yet to appear in print.... It perfectly captures the spirit of the men who made the division what it was—as well as the spirit of those troopers who survived to

help shape the postwar world." Imbrie praises the author's accuracy not only in the recording of names, places, and casualties but in larger matters, such as the basic structure of the Italian campaign.

Sanders, a music industry law specialist and a professor of ethics at New York University, is a longtime skier and amateur mountain photographer who has recorded visits to more 100 resorts on three continents.

A nephew of a 10th veteran, he grew up skiing in the Massachusetts Berkshires with veteran 10th troopers. "I wrote *The Boys of Winter* in part to educate myself insofar as I could about what my mentors had been through," he says. He researched the compelling tale of three young talented skiers growing up in Depression-era America and volunteering for the 10th.

Rudy Konieczny, a wild, working-class kid, grew up in the mill town of Adams, Massachusetts, in the shadow of Mount Greylock. Jacob Nunnenmacher, a dynamic young man from a privileged family in the Milwaukee area, went to Dartmouth and became captain of the Dartmouth ski team, where he raced against Konieczny. The third main character is Ralph Bromaghin, a young ski mountaineer from Seattle. Bromaghin was a founder of the Ptarmigan climbing club in the Pacific Northwest as well as a Sun Valley ski instructor.

Once in the 10th, all three became ski instructors in the Mountain Training Group. Once overseas, all are in the thick of the fighting in the Apennines. None of them make it back.

The hardest part of the work, says Sanders, was meeting the boys' families "who still grieve 60 years later." Major John Woodward of the 10th's 87th Regiment came to know all three. He writes, "I can say without exaggeration that they are among the most exceptional individuals I have ever known." —M.L.

The Boys of Winter by Charles Sanders; 256 pages, b&w illustrations, University Press of Colorado, www.upcolorado.com, \$19.97 at Amazon.com.

REMEMBERING



ERICH RIESS Ski Equipment Importer

Erich Riess, founder of Alpina Sports, suffered a heart attack and died January 9 while cross-country skiing in Quechee, Vermont. He was 83.

Riess was born in Tuttingen, Germany, on March 13, 1921, and served as a radar operator in Luftwaffe night fighters. In 1955 he settled in Hanover, New Hampshire, to import Rieber ski boots from Germany. He set up shop as the Transcontinental Service Corp. in Hanover and literally drove across the continent, visiting ski shops with a trunk full of samples. He helped found the National Ski Equipment and Clothing Association, which became Ski Industries America (today SnowSports Industries America), and served on its board of directors for years.

Rieber fell on hard times during the transition to plastic boots, and the factory folded in 1975. Erich then partnered with Rolf Schaer to launch Alpina Sports Corp. to import alpine and cross-country boots from the Alpina factory in Slovenia. They quickly built the company up to become the largest importer of cross-country footwear.

Erich was beloved in the ski business for his wry sense of humor and endless energy. After retiring in 1996, he remained active as a skier, canoeist, kayaker and hiker, bagging all 48 of the 4,000-foot peaks in New Hampshire's White Mountains.

Erich is survived by his wife Ruth, three children, and four grandchildren.—*Seth Masia*



MARVIN CRAWFORD Skimeister Champion

Marvin Crawford, who dominated the American Nordic Combined and Skimeister scene in the 1950s, died January 10, two days after suffering a massive stroke. He was 72.

Born July 30, 1932 in Denver, Marv grew up in Steamboat Springs, the son of the town's physician. By age 12, he was launching off the 90-meter jump on Howelsen Hill, and two years later he won both the National Junior Jumping Championship, and the National Junior Alpine Combined. He won the National Junior Jumping Championship three more times, until at age 18 he was no longer eligible.

By that time, Marv had become the mainstay of Willy Schaeffler's powerful University of Denver ski team, where he won every four-way or Skimeister event he entered. At the 1953 NCAA championships, he won the cross-country, jumping, and slalom titles outright, and finished second in downhill by a fifth of a second. While in college, he met his wife Edie; they had three sons—Gary, Rod, and Greg.

Marv won 14 national titles. He competed in the Nordic Combined at the 1954 Nordic World Championships in Falun, Sweden, and in the 1956 Olympics at Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy.

After working for IBM in Denver, Marv moved his family to Steamboat Springs where, beginning in 1961, he helped turn the tiny Storm Mountain ski area into what became Steamboat ski area. He was Steamboat's first mountain manager. He later managed the Storm Meadows Resort and was active in the early development of nearby Catamount.

In 1980, Marv served as the public address announcer at the Lake Placid Olympic jumping venue, where his son Gary competed. Marv was elected to the Colorado Ski Hall of Fame in 1981.—*Seth Masia*



BILL NORTON Area Manager, Tramway Expert

On Christmas Day, 2004, the ski world lost one of its most enduring institutions with the death of William A. "Bill"

Norton, at the age of 91.

Norton's career was built around ski area operations. He was superintendent of New Hampshire's Franconia State Park (site of Cannon Mountain) from 1955 until his retirement in 1980. During his tenure, the state-owned area grew exponentially, developing much new terrain and installing a new aerial tramway with 80-passenger cabins to replace the old 1938 tram, which was the first in North America.

But Norton's service was much more than as a ski area operator. He was a dedicated professional, serving the entire industry. He and his colleague, North Conway's Phil Robertson, were largely responsible for developing the lift safety standards that later became the B-77 American National Standard for Aerial Tramway and Lift Safety Requirements. He chaired the B-77 Committee for an astonishing 11 straight years.

Continued

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Please contact Kathe Dillmann, ISHA Development Director, via email at kadicom@aol.com, by phone 802-362-1667, or mail your contribution directly to ISHA, Box 644, Woodbury, CT 06798. Earmark your check "Rigo's Challenge."

(For more about Rigo and his Challenge, see our website, www.skiinghistory.org, or read about Rigo in the September 2004 issue.)

Norton served as the indispensable secretary of ski area organizations such as the Eastern Ski Area Operators Association and National Ski Areas Association (NSAA). He went on to serve two terms as president of NSAA, from 1975 to 1977, and served the State of New Hampshire as chairman of its Aerial Tramway Safety Board.

When Bill Norton was not straightening out the affairs of ski areas and their associations, he could usually be found in his spacious vegetable garden—an occupation that was more an addiction than a pastime. That and clamping. They still talk in NSAA circles of Norton arriving for a directors meeting with a couple of bushels he had harvested on Cape Cod.

Norton is survived by his wife of 63 years, Sybil, and by a son, two daughters, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.—*David Rowan*



GINNY COCHRAN Ski Racing Matriarch

Virginia "Ginny" Cochran, matriarch of the skiing Cochran family—Mickey, Barbara Ann, Marilyn, Bobby, Lindy—died February 5 at her home in Richmond, Vermont. She was 76.

A native Vermonter, Ginny Davis was a student at the University of Vermont when she met Mickey Cochran, then quarterback for the university football team and a semi-pro baseball player. They married in 1949 and had four children. In 1961, they bought a farmhouse in Richmond, Vermont, with a small hill in the back where the kids could ski and train after school. While Mickey coached the kids, Ginny was "the glue keeping things functioning for the family," said daughter Marilyn. They eventually opened a small ski area, Cochran's, on the site and coached thousands of youngsters in skiing and ski racing for more than four decades.

In addition to turning her home into a virtual incubator of little skiers, Ginny mothered a tribe of Olympic skiers. All four Cochran kids were on the U.S. Ski Team—Barbara Ann won Olympic slalom gold in 1972, Marilyn was America's first overall GS World Cup champ (1969)—and all four were U.S. national champions.

A lifelong skier, Ginny was also an exceptional teacher. When Cochran's opened, she taught an after-school program at the request of the local PTA. When Mickey, who also served a season as U.S. Ski Team alpine director in 1974, died in 1998, Ginny turned the hill into a non-profit area. Her crowning contribution was her recent gift of the ski area to the public for outdoor recreation and preservation, preferring not to let the land fall to developers but to see Cochran's live on, continuing to grow little skiers.

For her role in encouraging and developing young ski racers, Ginny was presented with the North American Snowsports Journalists Association's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2003. Said Bill Marolt, president of the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association, "The Cochrans and their devotion to family and to skiing represent the very best of our sport and, by all acclaim, Ginny was the rock everyone could count on."—*Combined sources*

2004 ISHA DONORS

Nearly 250 individuals and companies have graciously responded with donations to the International Skiing History Association over the past year. ISHA's mission is to preserve and advance the knowledge of ski history, and to increase public awareness of the sport's heritage. The principal means of fulfilling this mission is to publish *SKIING HERITAGE* and to offer the most extensive website (skiinghistory.org) dedicated to the sport's history. Both efforts involve the considerable costs of research, editing,

and writing. You can help by making a gift. ISHA is a 501(c)(3) corporation, so your donation is tax-deductible. Send your check to the International Skiing History Association, c/o Beardsley Publishing, P.O. Box 644, Woodbury, CT 06798.

We would like to acknowledge the following for their generous support through their personal donations as of February 23, 2004. Contributors to the Rigo Thurmer Matching Fund will be acknowledged in our next issue.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Building Readership, Rigo's Generous Gift

The seminal event for our association this year is The Benefit Gathering being held March 21-27 at The Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, Vermont. This is the time when new board members are elected, our budget is approved, awards are given, and what we hope to accomplish in the next 12 months will be discussed.

In the short time that I have had the privilege of being president of the International Skiing History Association I have learned a lot about what makes us tick. The active involvement of the board is crucial. In 2005 one of our first objectives needs to be the encouragement of board members to share the responsibilities of helping ISHA fulfill its mission.

I will single out Dean Ericson as one example of what can be accomplished. At our long-term planning meeting held last June, we identified several initiatives we believed we could achieve within our budget that would serve the greater community of those interested in skiing history and be consistent with our mission. That was to create a digitized compilation of all identifiable records on skiing history, to create standards for the compilation, and to engage North America's ski museums to cooperate in the effort.

Fortuitously, at about the same time, John Fry was discussing with Henry Yapple how best to publish Mr. Yapple's bibliography of ski writings, films, and videos. To make a long story short, ISHA facilitated the publishing of *Ski Bibliography* (Skier's Bookshelf, p. 41), which serves as well as a guide for Dean to move the digitizing effort forward. Dean recently received letters of support from the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame and Museum and six regional ski museums. He is meeting with museum representatives during our Gathering in Stowe to move this ambitious effort forward. The next step is to find a foundation or other source to fund the project.

This is one example of how ISHA, as a national organization, can work with regional museums, so that we are able to focus on projects that benefit everyone.

It is also an example of how one board member can make a difference. Our goal in 2005-2006 is to identify additional ways that the association can work with the regional museums to start and finish projects that make life easier for the small cadre of volunteers who are working hard to preserve and make accessible the artifacts, art, and words that comprise skiing's history.

A second board member whom I will single out is Rigo

Thurmer. I wish all readers of SKIING HERITAGE were able to meet and get to know Rigo, as I have. He exemplifies in many ways what skiing and being a skier is all about. He is a man who "walks the walk," as he puts it. First, Rigo issued a challenge grant to the board in which he pledged to match \$50,000 in member contributions to continue the work of SKIING HERITAGE. When the matching funds of members were slow to materialize, Rigo simply gave his \$50,000 as an endowment to continue funding the work of SKIING HERITAGE.

It is my hope that we can match Rigo's \$50,000 as quickly as possible, both as an expression of our appreciation for his generosity and as recognition that we share his enthusiasm for SKIING HERITAGE.

One item on our plate at Stowe is to look at ways of increasing the number of readers of our flagship publication SKIING HERITAGE. We've established a goal of 3,000 subscribers by 2007, and we're nearly halfway toward achieving our goal. Circulation growth has been strong over the last two years and we need to assure that this momentum continues.

Most agree that adding color to the covers has enhanced the appeal of the magazine. Personally, I think our most recent covers have been outstanding and we have Editor Dick Needham to thank for his outstanding selection.

But our current concern is the age of SKIING HERITAGE's readers. To achieve our circulation goal we need to address ways on how to appeal to younger readers. One reason: there are simply more of them.

I must say that one of the most rewarding parts of my job has been the success of our fundraising efforts over the past fall and winter. I didn't know what to expect as we began the process. Nearly 250—18 percent of ISHA members—contributed \$45,405 from the beginning of October through February 15.

This level of participation will serve us well as we address foundations for grant money to fund new initiatives. It will allow us to continue to publish important articles and fund the research necessary to assure their historical accuracy. And, with board approval, it will allow us to begin the job of recording oral histories, a project whose time has come.

A hearty thanks to all who have contributed in the past year, and a reminder that it is never too late to help out.

I hope to see many of you in Stowe and have the opportunity to thank you personally. —*Jim Spring*

Paper Tiger Racer

There is nothing like the success of a colleague to put spurs to one's ambition. I had a nodding acquaintance with George Plimpton from my days at *Sports Illustrated*, and when he became all the rage for *Paper Tiger* on his adventures as a supremely unqualified pro quarterback, I (dismayingly, now that I look back on it) persuaded the editor of *Ski* to let me take a flier at amateur ski racing.

My qualifications were as impressive as Plimpton's for his debut. They consisted of a nonpareil technique of defensive skiing (nothing worse than black-and-blue marks and occasional edge-cut shins) and a good healthy fear of speed. My complete racing record consisted of one giant slalom in Laconia, New Hampshire, when, as a reporter from the *Laconia Citizen*, I was handily beaten by a 7-year-old named Penny Pitou. I called my old friend, Olympic stalwart and now the presiding genius at Waterville Valley, New Hampshire, Tom Corcoran.

"Tom," I said, "I want to start racing."

"No kidding?" said Tom.

"Yeah," I said. "I want to come up

and have you coach me."

"How about going into my junior program?" said Tom.

"No, thanks," I said. "Little kids bug me."

"Tell you what," Tom said. "Come on up for the Hochgebirge Club races and I'll let you run the course."

"Great," I said. "That's perfect. Gee, think of racing with the Hochburgers."

"Don't call them," said Tom hastily. "I'll make the arrangements."

"Right," I said. "Don't call them. Let them call me."

"Right," said Tom.

And so it was that I arrived at Cannon Mt., New Hampshire, with my new red-and-white crash helmet with padding all inside. Tom set up a "simple little slalom," as he called it, on a small *steilhang*.

"Uh," said Tom as we climbed the course before our run. "you don't need a helmet for this."

"Why not?" I said testily.

"Racers only use the helmet in the GS and downhill," said Tom. "It's a matter of form."

"Form, schmorm," I said. "You should see the speeds I reach in a slalom."

From the top, the slalom looked like a rat's nest. Corcoran, fourth in the 1960 Olympic slalom, eel-hipped his way through the maze resembling a bamboo-spike tiger trap. The racers all followed.

"OK, Mort," screamed Tom from the bottom.

I actually felt he was enjoying this. At each gate, the track got closer and closer to the inside pole of the turn, my skis swung wider and wider and wider. I staggered down the course, ejecting slalom poles to both sides.

"Sorry about that," I said as I got to my feet at the bottom, wiping a stray pole off my jacket.

Tom said, "Sorry, hell. You've just set the world record for number of sticks splintered in 10 seconds!" The rest of the Hochies nodded sagely.

"Thanks," I said simply.

"And," Tom said, "tomorrow wear the helmet."

By Morten Lund. Adapted from the December 1968 issue of Ski Magazine.

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